

Harmony Supporting Top Educators Program (H-STEP) Baseline Year Evaluation Report



Prepared for:



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CTAC's staff is comprised of nationally recognized executives, educators, policy makers, researchers and organizers who have extensive experience working with city, county and state agencies, educational institutions, federal legislative bodies, not-for-profit organizations, philanthropic institutions and the private sector.

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In September 2016, Harmony Public Schools (HPS) received a U.S. Department of Education FY 2016 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) five-year grant of \$26,720,738 to support new strategies to improve the effectiveness of HPS educators. The Harmony Supporting Top Educators Program (H-STEP)¹ proposal identified four levers to address this goal:

- Lever 1: Deepening and differentiating professional development for teachers
- Lever 2: Deepening and differentiating professional development for administrators
- Lever 3: Developing more consistency in career pathways across the district
- Lever 4: Rewarding teaching and leading with financial incentives

This report serves as a baseline for this multi-year initiative by providing initial perceptions and performance levels on key measures associated with the H-STEP levers: participation in teacher and principal professional development and career pathways, and student performance and educator evaluation outcomes.

CTAC is collecting and analyzing four types of data for this evaluation: perceptual data from educators including surveys, interviews, and focus groups; educator performance data including principal and teacher evaluations; student performance data including NWEA, STAAR, and EOC assessments; and artifacts of program implementation. Based on the ongoing analysis of these data, the key baseline findings and perceptions are as follows:

H-STEP Launch

The H-STEP initiative is well underway and the full weight of the district is behind it. During the Year One planning, development, and rollout phase, HPS actively engaged vendors and began to pilot strategies to support all four levers for change. HPS' organizational sophistication has grown during this early phase. In this baseline year, Harmony hit the ground running *and* learning.

School Climate

Teachers, parents, and students are positive about their experiences at HPS. They feel there are high expectations for students to succeed and that teachers go beyond their designated responsibilities to aid students. Challenges include the need to expand communication efforts and establish more stability in the principals' role in order to strengthen school culture.

¹ In this report, the terms "TIF" and "H-STEP" are used interchangeably to reference work resulting from the TIF grant award.

Professional Development

Teachers appreciate having opportunities to participate in professional development but would like to see offerings more tailored to their specific roles. This is a particular concern for non-core teachers who often feel that their needs are overlooked in the planning of professional development. Teachers, principals, and coaches alike cite a desire for more practical application of the professional development so that learning and new practices can be more effectively translated to the classroom. Educators appreciate the ability to collaborate with peers and are looking forward to sharing learning in PLCs.

Career Pathways

Teachers have difficulty articulating the career pathways that are available to them. In some cases, they appear to be unaware of options or their eligibility to participate. The connection between evaluations, professional development, and career pathways is unclear to teachers and principals. Teachers indicate that evaluation conferences would be more meaningful if they were consistently tied to specific recommendations for professional growth. Coaches are willing to support teachers' growth, but need to have greater access to the teachers' evaluation to be effective.

Performance-based Compensation

Interviewees largely indicate that teachers' commitment to their students and a supportive school culture are more motivational for high performance than are financial incentives. At the same time, most feel that financial incentives do provide tangible evidence of appreciation for a job well done. There is misunderstanding about the basis for incentive awards.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation

The principal and teacher evaluation system is appreciated, in part because of its focus on the growth of the teacher. In practice, principals and teachers find that the application of the system is time-consuming and managed inconsistently across and within campuses. This leads to concerns about the fidelity of implementation and the overall evaluation outcomes. Many teachers have questions about the qualifications of their observers. Principals like the evaluation and goal setting approach but feel they lack the time to complete all observations properly.

H-STEP Program

Interview and survey respondents feel that the H-STEP program will increase reflection on practice and increase collegiality and sharing with peers. While many question the potential impact of H-STEP on recruitment and the impact of money as a motivator, they value H-STEP's pedagogical support, professional learning communities, and professional development tied to evaluation outcomes.

Additional Support Needed

Educators appreciate the interaction with the central office. Campus-based educators want more focused and customized assistance that addresses the specific needs they have on their campuses and in their classrooms. Principals, teachers, and coaches identify specific areas where assistance is needed. For HPS educators and parents, alike, there is an overriding need to improve the quality, consistency, and content of communications.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation Outcomes

Overall, both teacher and principal evaluation ratings are improving over time. The improvements may be due to an increased understanding of the new evaluation parameters or due to improvements in performance. Although teachers on TIF campuses were originally rated as less effective than teachers from non-TIF campuses, those differences are now narrowing. When TIF schools are examined separately, teachers in non-priority schools are generally receiving higher ratings than teachers in priority TIF schools.

Student Performance Outcomes

CTAC reviewed both NWEA MAP and STAAR/EOC assessment results to assess existing trends in student performance. We examined four years of data from both sources to provide a view of student learning across content areas.

HPS student achievement on the NWEA assessments exceeds the national norm in most grades. This is especially evident in the middle and high school grades. This applies to all subject areas under study—reading, writing, mathematics, and science. This pattern is relatively consistent over time. The most notable changes in the scores are in mathematics where students start out below the norm in early grades. By the tenth grade, scores are consistently 11-12 points above the norm.

Further, on the STAAR/EOC assessments, students' scale scores and proficiency outcomes are increasing in STEM-related subjects—mathematics, science, algebra, and biology. They are generally flat in the other tested subjects. Non-English language learners are outperforming English language learners in meeting growth expectations in reading and mathematics, although there have been higher percentages of English language learners in the "exceeds" growth expectations in recent years for both subjects.

In Algebra I, English language learners are demonstrating a higher level of growth than their peers. Writing and social studies scores for all students are less positive. Less than 60% of students are proficient in STAAR writing and little change is seen in that percentage over time. STAAR social studies performance is low in the eighth grade, although more than 75% of students are achieving at the "meet" and "masters" levels on U.S. History, indicating improvement by high school in a related subject area.

Student performance as measured by the NWEA assessments are consistent with the findings from the STAAR/EOC assessments for mathematics and science. In mathematics, students start out below the norms in grades 2-4, but exceed the norms and cut-offs beginning in middle school on both measures. In science, students' scores are higher than the NWEA norms at every grade level and the STAAR findings actually show increasing scores over the years.

Implications and Next Steps

Many of the foundational components needed for H-STEP to be successful are being put in place. Both support and incentives are being made available to teachers, principals, and other educators.

At the completion of Year One, the baseline year, the initiative is in its preadolescence. How HPS carries out the next steps in implementation will be key to fulfilling the aspirations and achieving the goals of H-STEP. There are legitimate reasons to celebrate early successes and concurrently focus attention on addressing needs identified by key constituencies.

Areas for improvement are described below:

Issue One: Communications

- Convene a communications task force.
- Build an interactive and dedicated H-STEP webpage.
- Develop and distribute H-STEP monthly talking points.

Issue Two: Professional Development

- Provide professional development opportunities tailored to both core and non-core content area teachers.
- Emphasize and build the instructional and evaluative capacity of principals.
- Develop a series of principal leadership prompts.

Issue Three: Implementation Guidance

- Provide a series of crosswalk resources for teachers and principals to delineate the connections between evaluation, professional development, and career pathways.
- Set the expectation for principals that linking the growth needs of teachers to professional development is a core part of the evaluation process.

Issue Four: Policy

- Establish policy regarding the length of principal assignments.

Summary

HPS is already making important strides in implementing the H-STEP initiative. The steps taken to-date are encouraging and valued by frontline educators. Building on the accomplishments of Year One, the baseline year, HPS is well positioned to address the issues and challenges that are emerging during implementation.

II. OVERVIEW

Teacher Incentive Fund Grant

In September 2016, Harmony Public Schools (HPS) received a U.S. Department of Education FY 2016 Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant of \$26,720,738 to support new strategies to improve the effectiveness of HPS educators. The Harmony Supporting Top Educators Program (H-STEP) proposal identified four levers to address this goal:

- Lever 1: Deepening and differentiating professional development for teachers
- Lever 2: Deepening and differentiating professional development for administrators
- Lever 3: Developing more consistency in career pathways across the district
- Lever 4: Rewarding teaching and leading with financial incentives

At the time of the TIF application, HPS had 46 schools located in 7 local educational agencies. Planning and consultation processes beginning shortly after award notification.

Goal of this Report

This report documents implementation in the first year as well as establishes the baseline for future reports by providing initiative perceptions and performance levels on key measures associated with the H-STEP levers: participation in teacher and principal professional development and career pathways, and student performance and educator evaluation outcomes. Data on these measures will be collected annually to track changes that may occur over time as a result of H-STEP's implementation. Each report will describe findings and their implications. Where appropriate, recommendations for improvements to implementation will be provided.

We begin by describing current H-STEP implementation progress and then the methods that we used to collect data. This is followed by a summary of perceptual data gathered from educators on TIF campuses. Then, we examine the record of teacher and principal performance data leading up to this year. We also examine trends and patterns in student achievement. Finally, we summarize the findings and provide implications from the evidence gathered.

Year One Efforts: Professional Development and Career Pathways

To support the implementation of H-STEP, HPS hired several vendors to provide targeted assistance, as described below. By design, Year One was a consultation and planning year.

For Levers 1 and 2, HPS hired Solution Tree and Teach Plus to help support teachers and administrators in developing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The goal of PLCs is to leverage the talents of teacher leaders to facilitate job-embedded professional development in

content and grade-level teams. As part of this effort, administrators attended two days of PLC training. Solution Tree facilitated the first session which focused on setting the foundation for PLCs. HPS staff facilitated the second session which focused on providing practical training on launching and supporting PLCs at the campuses. Teacher leaders received two days of training, facilitated by Teach Plus, to equip these educators with the skill sets needed to lead PLCs on their home campuses. Approximately 100 administrators, 280 teacher leaders, and 30 coaches participated in these trainings. These initial trainings were completed by August of 2017. Additional support and mid-year training are planned for the 2017-2018 school year.

Work also progressed on Levers 1, 3, and 4 with Bellwether Education Partners as the vendor. The focus of this work is to align professional development offerings, competencies desired, and pathways for educators to advance within the system. Beginning in March 2017, Bellwether began to offer recommendations for professional development for teachers, guidance around strategies to improve transparency about career pathways, and advice concerning the administration of incentives. To date, four half-day working sessions were held with the H-STEP Steering Committee and key members from the cluster and central offices. Fifteen HPS staff members participated.

To aid in the Lever 1 work, Corwin Press staff provided instructional coaches with additional training on strategies for targeting support to teachers on their campuses. This included a two-day coaching workshop held in July 2017. According to HPS, approximately 60-90 coaches and curriculum directors attended. Principals and assistant principals were also asked to attend. The training focused on developing coaching forms and scheduling coaching cycles to be implemented in the 2017-2018 school year.

HPS is using BloomBoard as the vendor to complete work related to Lever 3. This collaboration has focused on developing personalized and competency-based professional development (PD) offerings that are aligned with the teacher evaluation rubric, Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System (H-TESS). BloomBoard worked with HPS to identify PD offerings from the *Teach Like a Champion*® curriculum that are consistent with the competencies in the H-TESS system. In the final offerings, teachers and administrators will be able to identify areas of growth and select related content for study. Each module will be designed to lead teachers through the development of artifacts demonstrating their learning. These artifacts will then be used as evidence of teacher competencies, which, in turn, provide the basis for the award of micro-credentials. As part of this effort, approximately 150 teachers, coaches, and central office curriculum directors have participated in 7-8 webinars.

To further address Lever 2, the University of Texas at Austin's Institute of Public Schools Initiative will provide professional development for emerging leaders. Planning for these trainings began in July of 2017, focusing on three key standards of the state's Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) rubric for administrators: instructional leadership, school culture, and human capital. Twenty-one training modules are planned for principals and assistant principals. This work has an expected completion date of July 2018.

Summary: Year One Efforts

Harmony Public Schools began to implement the plan for improving teacher effectiveness as soon as the grant was awarded in the fall of 2016. In this initial year, HPS has worked with several vendors to plan professional development, develop career pathways, and prepare to distribute the first round of incentives. HPS was able to plan and begin piloting strategies to address each of the four levers for change.

III. METHODOLOGY

CTAC used a mixed methods approach for this baseline report, drawing on both qualitative and quantitative data. The multiple sources of data include: (a) interviews and focus groups with educators, parents, and students; (b) survey responses from teachers, principals, and other educators from all TIF campuses; (c) teacher and principal evaluation data; (d) student achievement data; (e) participation in professional development; and (f) artifacts.

The following questions guided the report:

- How has H-STEP been implemented in 2016-2017?
- What were teachers' and principals' beliefs and attitudes toward H-STEP?
- What was the perceived impact of H-STEP on educator and student outcomes?
- What support do educators need for H-STEP implementation?

These questions focus on the early implementation of H-STEP and examine baseline perceptions of principals and teachers about the district and the TIF program. Answers to these questions will help to inform the implementation of the H-STEP initiative.

Data Collection

Interviews and Focus Groups

CTAC developed protocols for confidential interviews and focus groups in collaboration with HPS. The protocols were tailored to the role of the participant and included items related to their understanding of procedures and impact of H-STEP, professional development, and student learning. Individual interviews were conducted with principals (N=8), instructional coaches (N=8), area superintendents (N=2), deans of academics (N=8), and area coordinators (N=7). These numbers exceeded goals set in advance to meet a representative sample. In-person interviews were held at 6 HPS campuses and supplemented with telephone interviews for individuals representing 3 additional campuses. Of the 36 total interviews, 30 were held on site.

During the initial planning visits, CTAC met either individually or in groups with 2 TIF program leaders, the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Talent Officer, the Superintendent of Schools, the Board President, 8 Directors, a statistician, and those in charge of the student information system. During the campus visits, teacher focus groups were held at each of 6 campuses visited with 62 total participants. At three of those sites, focus groups were held for students and parents. Twenty-five students participated in the focus groups, and, while lower than anticipated, 12 parents participated in focus groups.

In the discussion of the interviews that follows, central office administrators, area superintendents, principals, deans of academics, and area coordinators have been grouped together in the “administrator” category to protect the identity of interviewees. Similarly, instructional coaches and teachers have been grouped in the “teacher” category.

H-STEP Teacher and Administrator Survey

HPS staff members were invited to complete a web-based confidential survey which CTAC developed in partnership with HPS. The survey was launched on May 12, 2017, using the SurveyMonkey.com platform. TIF leaders in HPS sent an invitation to participate with the link to the survey to all TIF campuses. CTAC updated HPS twice a week on the progress of survey participation. Multiple reminders were sent by the HPS team to maximize the number of responses. The survey was closed on May 26, 2017.

Multiple choice questions in the survey centered on: (a) campus conditions and culture; (b) professional development; (c) career pathways; (d) teacher and administrator evaluation; (e) performance-based compensation; (f) the impact of H-STEP on educator effectiveness and student growth; (g) the impact of H-STEP on educator engagement and retention; and (h) capacity building. An open-ended question was included which provided an opportunity for the respondents to share any comments they had concerning the H-STEP initiative.

All 39 TIF campuses had access to the survey. This included educators from 8 priority campuses and 31 non-priority campuses. Due to HPS’ emphasis on improving the performance of priority campuses, responses for educators associated with the priority campuses are reported separately in some of the analyses. The overall response rate is high with 87.6% of staff members answering the survey (see Table 1). Response rates are higher for educators from the priority campuses, 97.5%, as compared to 85% in other HPS TIF campuses.

Table 1: Survey Respondents by Role (N = 1,968)

Primary Position	Percent of staff in position who responded to the survey	Number of survey respondents	Percent of overall sample of responses
Classroom teachers	82.6%	1,190	60.5%
Non-classroom teachers (e.g., interventionists, reading specialists)	100.0%	132	6.7%
Special programs educators (e.g., ESL/SPED/GT coordinators and teachers)	89.0%	259	13.2%
Principals	100.0%	41	2.1%
Assistant Principals	99.1%	105	5.3%
Other campus administrators (e.g., operations manager, counselor, testing coordinators)	89.2%	148	7.5%
Not specified	---	93	4.7%

The survey analysis included an examination of the responses by three teacher categories: classroom teacher, non-classroom teacher (e.g., interventionists, reading specialists), and special programs educator (e.g., ESL/SPED/GT coordinators and teachers). However, these groups responded in a highly consistent manner. Therefore, their responses have been grouped together in the “teacher” category.

For similar reasons, responses from principals and assistant principals have been grouped into one category, “principal.” Due to uncertainty about the actual roles of those who either did not specify their roles or described themselves as an “other” campus administrator, those responses have been eliminated from further analyses. Initial analyses include cross tabulations and figures to display the findings. Mann-Whitney U tests were conducted to examine the statistical significance of the differences across groups.

Teacher and Principal Evaluation (Observation) Data

CTAC analyzed teacher performance data which was gathered from observations conducted by HPS in the 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 school years. We reviewed evaluation ratings for five key measures of the Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System (H-TESS) evaluation rubric:

- 1c. Setting instructional outcomes
- 2c. Managing classroom procedures
- 3b. Using questioning/prompts and discussion
- 3c. Engaging students in learning
- 3d. Using assessment in learning

These data included evaluation scores for 145 teachers in the first year, 1,634 in the second, and 2,059 in the third. Announced and unannounced observations were included in analyses, with scores on each indicator averaged across all ratings for each individual. CTAC examined three years of data to establish both the baseline and existing trends. This will make it possible to determine if there are changes in the trends in future years. These data include only those evaluations completed using the H-TESS rubric.

Principal evaluation data were available for the 2015-2016 and the 2016-2017 school years. The data described rating levels on the five components of the Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) rubric: Instructional Leadership, Human Capital, Executive Leadership, School Culture, and Strategic Operations, as well as goal attainment. The T-PESS rubric was first used in the 2015-2016 school year. Therefore, earlier ratings, using a different rubric, would not be appropriate for comparisons.

Student Achievement Data

CTAC reviewed both NWEA MAP and STAAR assessment results, including the end-of-course measures, to assess existing trends in student performance. The NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) is a nationally normed adaptive assessment. It is administered by the district as both a diagnostic measure to determine the level of support needed and as a formative measure to assess progress toward mastery of content during the year. The STAAR state assessments are given annually as summative measures of student learning. Measures include:

Content Measured	Grade Levels with Available Data	
	NWEA MAP	STAAR/EOC
Reading and Mathematics	K through 10	3 through 8
Language Usage	3 through 10	4 and 7 (Writing)
Science	4 through 8	5 and 8
Social Studies	8	U.S. History (9 or 10)
Algebra I		9 or 10
English I and II		9, 10, or 11
Biology		High School

We will use these data to establish the pattern of achievement that existed prior to H-STEP's implementation.

Participation in Professional Development

CTAC collected data regarding participation in professional development. These data were available for teacher professional development held during the 2016-2017 school year for campuses in Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, El Paso, Houston North, and Houston South. Systems for recording data were not consistent across campuses and may not have been complete. In some cases, agendas were provided but attendance was not recorded systematically. Similarly, leadership professional development agendas were provided for the same school year for trainings available to HPS leaders across campuses. Participation was not systematically recorded.

Artifacts

Finally, CTAC reviewed artifacts and data related to implementation of the H-STEP plan. These include the H-STEP plan as introduced from the TIF proposal, the TIF bonus plan, and the communication plan for TIF. CTAC also reviewed materials related to the budget and the compensation plan. To round out the picture of the district, we reviewed the HPS 2020 Strategic Plan, three campus improvement plans, organizational charts, summaries of previous surveys, and an external review conducted by AdvanceEd. School climate survey data summaries were also examined for the 2016-2017 school year. Lastly, CTAC reviewed documentation associated with assessments, including the calendar and information on the use of NWEA MAP in the district.

Limitations

Four limitations are apparent in the data. First, the teacher evaluation data are limited in the 2014-2015 school year, the first year that H-TESS was introduced. Only 145 teachers were evaluated using the rubric, in part due to the fact that training in the use of the rubric was ongoing. This may limit establishing early trends in the data.

Second, professional development programming and attendance were not recorded systematically across campuses and clusters. Actual participation rates for past years, including 2016-2017, cannot be calculated. Also, although some individual professional development providers did collect satisfaction ratings at the end of training, this was not a consistent procedure and these data were not available. Moving forward, CTAC assisted HPS to put new procedures in place for more systematic data recording as well as collection of satisfaction surveys at the completion of professional development offerings. These data will allow for analysis of the effectiveness of the professional development in subsequent reports.

Third, incentive payout data for the 2016-2017 school year were not available at the time of this report. Payouts were completed in October of 2017. In subsequent reports, we will summarize the incentives paid by year as these data are available.

Finally, school climate data were not available in raw data from past years. Accordingly, this year's survey forms the baseline for school climate perceptions. Annual surveys will be administered in the future to provide ongoing data about changing perceptions over time.

Despite these limitations, consistent findings emerge from the survey responses, interviews, and focus groups. Together they draw a clear picture of what respondents see as the strengths and areas of improvement of H-STEP. These findings have important policy and practice implications for the continued implementation and improvement of the initiative.

Summary: Data Collection

CTAC is collecting and analyzing four types of data for this evaluation: perceptual data from educators including surveys, interviews, and focus groups; educator performance data including principal and teacher evaluations; student performance data including NWEA, STAAR, and EOC assessments; and artifacts of program implementation.

CTAC will use the analyses of these data to identify changes over time and to ascertain overall impact as H-STEP is implemented on the TIF campuses.

IV. BASELINE FINDINGS

Perceptual Data

Baseline data from surveys, interviews, and focus groups indicate high levels of satisfaction among parents, students, and teachers with the HPS system. They describe the schools as providing academically challenging and supportive environments for students, and parents are complimentary of the student learning and particularly of HPS teachers. Teachers and principals agree that professional development is made available to them and they are aware of potential pathways for personal growth within the system. The substance of H-STEP is new to the staff and there are some gaps in knowledge about the program. The first payout of incentives was occurring concurrently with the completion of this report. Therefore, perceptions of the incentives associated with H-STEP are just being formed.

In this section, we review findings from the survey, interview, and focus group data. The organization follows the sections presented on the survey, including perceptions of: School Climate, Professional Development, Career Pathways, Performance-Based Compensation (PBC), Principal and Teacher Evaluation, Outcomes Associated with H-STEP, and Additional Support Needed.

School Climate

The initial section of the survey addressed perceptions of school climate (see Figure 1). Findings indicate that teachers and principals have high expectations for students. Most teachers feel supported by their principals and believe that the campus is designed to support continuous learning for educators. There are differences between administrators and teachers in each of these categories, with administrators having the highest levels of positive responses.

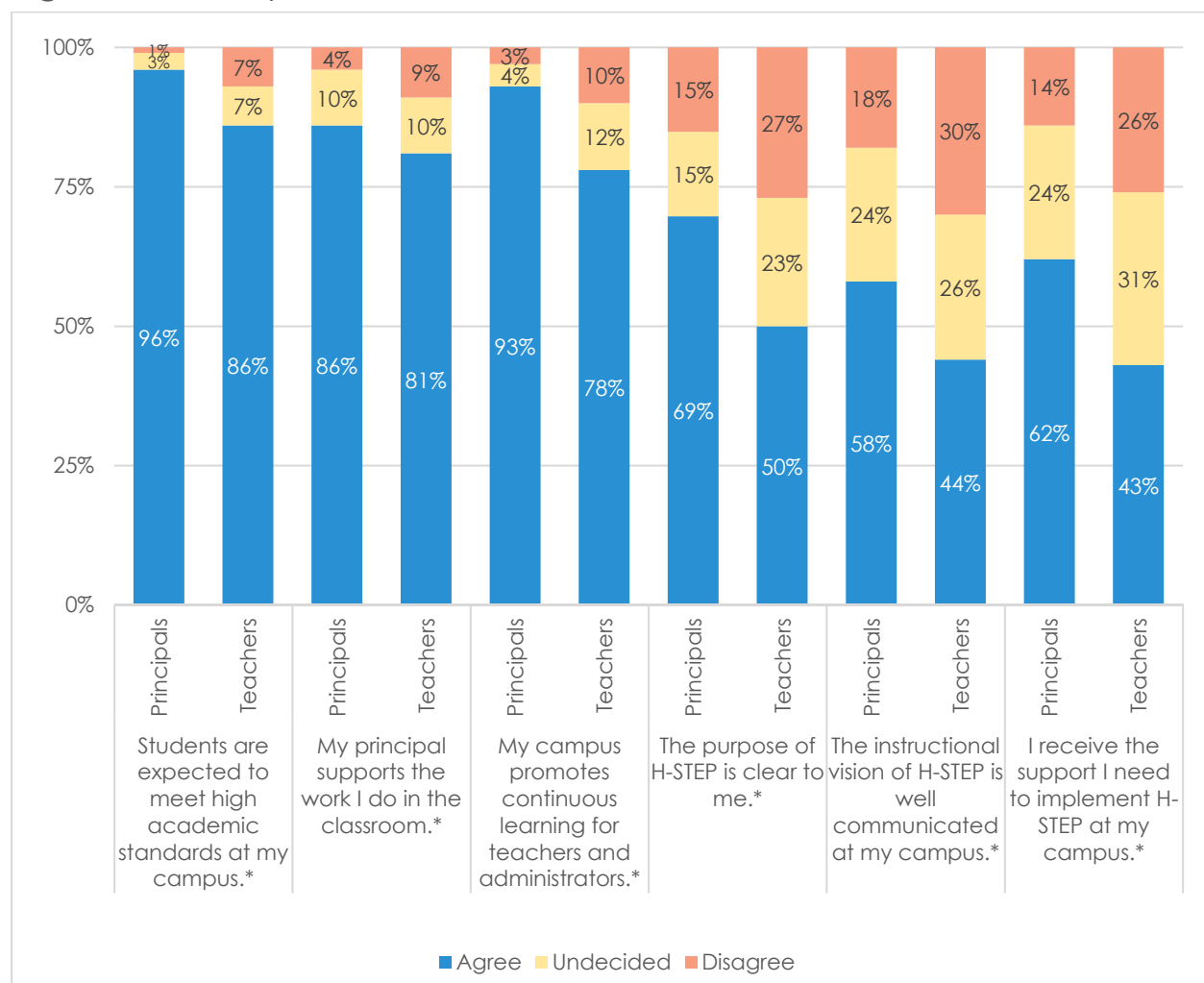
For many teachers, a major concern centers on communication from the central office to the schools.

Perceptions about the H-STEP program are less positive. Fifty percent of teachers and 69% of principals agree that the purpose of H-STEP is clear to them, and fewer feel the vision for H-STEP is well communicated. Almost two-thirds of principals feel they receive the support needed to implement H-STEP as compared to 43% of teachers. For many teachers, a major concern centers on communication from the central office to the schools. In the focus groups, many teachers in the TIF campuses express little to no knowledge of H-STEP or the proposed changes associated with it. As one teacher states:

“H-STEP has not been fully and clearly explained to all teachers, and a program that is not well-defined and explained will be difficult to implement well.”

-Teacher

Figure 1: Perceptions of School Climate



Note: Throughout the survey tables and figures in this report, Principals refers to principals and assistant principals; Teachers refers to classroom teachers, non-classroom teachers (e.g., interventionists, reading specialists), and special programs educators (e.g., ESL/SPED/GT coordinators and teachers). Agree (or A) is a composite of strongly agree/agree. U = Undecided. Disagree (or D) is a composite of strongly disagree/disagree. * indicates statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence level between principals and teachers. N (principal) = 146; N (teacher) = 1,581. Due to rounding, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100%.

To follow-up on the survey items, CTAC asked parents, teachers, principals, and district staff in interviews and focus groups about school climate. These discussions were wide-ranging, with comments addressing the following major areas: Expectations for students, principal support, overall satisfaction with HPS, teaching approach, and student needs. Each is discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

Expectations for students

Parents feel that teachers have high expectations for their students. As one parent indicates:

“I think they have higher expectations than other schools. If you compare my kindergarten students to my friends’ kindergarten students, they are two different ends of the spectrum. I feel that they don’t expect more out of our children—they just mold them to be better.”

-Parent

Another parent comments that students are continually motivated, particularly by the counselor who *“whispers in their ears constantly”* to remind them that, with hard work, they can accomplish great things. As one parent reports: *“there is a lot of positivity in the environment.”*

Students feel strongly that teachers are helping to increase their confidence in learning and that teachers adapt to their learning styles.

“Our teachers say we should not be afraid of the STAAR; the STAAR should be afraid of us. We will beat the STAAR test.”

-Student

“They [teachers] tell us, you don’t need any luck, you’ve got this.”

-Student

Principal Support

Teachers’ impressions of school climate are dependent upon school leadership. For example, one teacher was extremely positive about a hands-on assistant principal who collaborated closely with teachers to innovate in the classroom.

*Teachers’
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A number of teachers report that their principals are very supportive, *“standing up for us.”* One teacher described an incident where she had expressed concern about low observation ratings. But when the principal was approached about it, he was willing to sit down with the teacher and explain his observations in detail.

Others feel that principals may lack interpersonal skills to support teachers’ growth. Many of these problems seem to center on negativity in communication.

“I have seen a number of great teachers who want to stay but they are in tears at the end of the year because the principal talked to them in a negative way.”

-Teacher

“There’s a lot of friction where there doesn’t need to be and there is no clear reason why.”

-Teacher

Principal turnover is frequently cited as a concern by teachers. A number of teachers describe marked differences in how campuses are run when principals change, requiring them to do additional work to learn the “new” way of doing things to meet the expectations of their new leader. Several note that there is a general upheaval in how the school works during these transitions, disrupting the normal processes enough that students usually notice the difference. Students in the focus groups indicate that they are aware of principal turnover and, in some cases, have difficulty adjusting to the style and manner of the new principal.

Principal turnover is frequently cited as a concern by teachers.

Teacher interviewees also raise questions about the instructional knowledge of the school leaders. Some teachers feel that principals are knowledgeable about instruction but are distracted by extensive administrative responsibilities including building new facilities and maintaining the buildings, all of which prevent them from attending to classroom activities and teacher growth. Yet many others question the qualifications of leaders including their knowledge of best instructional practices.

“There is a serious need for highly qualified individuals in leadership positions. There are currently unqualified individuals in many positions, campus level and beyond, that have little knowledge or experience in the education field and therefore have a difficult time relating to and assisting teachers.”

-Teacher

Overall Satisfaction with HPS

CTAC asked parents, teachers, and students to describe their perceptions of the climate in their schools. Parents and students report high levels of satisfaction with the program offerings, the teachers, and the atmosphere in the campuses. They appreciate the diversity in the student body, feeling that exposure to individuals from a variety of backgrounds is a benefit for students. According to parents, students from all backgrounds in the school are taught to accept each other and, as a result, they work well together.

One parent indicated that she appreciated the fact that although her child spoke Spanish at home, she would not be assigned to classes taught in Spanish in grades K-2 and then shifted to classes taught solely in English in grade 3, which apparently is the pattern in the public schools. She felt it was particularly beneficial for students to be taught in English from the first day and that her child would be better served with the HPS model. She also indicated that once she learned this was the case, she immediately put her child on the waiting list for this school.

One sentiment expressed repeatedly was the feeling that the school staff is responsive to student needs.

“When I went to an open house at another charter, no one was talking to my child—they were just trying to sell me something. Here all the people were talking to my daughter.”

-Parent

“My dyslexic kids want to read so much. The motivation is there. They care a lot and once they feel you believe in them, there is no stopping them.”

-Teacher

Another parent noted that their HPS campus was the only one where they had everyone available to answer questions on the school visit—the teachers, principal, and even the superintendent.

Students are also positive about their experiences in HPS schools. They are pleased with the availability of technology, project-based learning, and extracurricular activities and clubs. The fact the campuses are not extremely large appeals to a number of students who report,

“We are friends with the teachers. There is after school help. It makes learning fun.”

-Student

Teaching Approach

Project-based learning was described in detail by a number of students, who explained their projects and the assistance they received from their teachers. Students were excited and proud to demonstrate their projects to the interviewers and had well-prepared and articulate explanations of their work when CTAC visited the campuses. Their descriptions indicate that students are challenged to stretch their learning while being provided with substantial scaffolding from their teachers.

At the elementary level, some students express concern about feeling rushed with the 45 minutes of content and 45 minutes of lab format. Some feel that that pacing might be too fast for some peers. At the middle and high school levels, students are concerned that their teachers may lack extensive content knowledge of a specific course due to the number of courses they have to teach. There is a common concern about teachers' ability to make the content accessible to students at a level that they can understand. Parents express some concern over plans for differentiation. In some cases, the concern is based on class size: *"How can you differentiate when there are 28 kids in the class?"* Several parents noted that identification of students for special services may be lagging because teachers may not be taught to recognize learning difficulties or that some students may be misidentified.

Student Needs

Some parents, students, and teachers report that discipline is a challenge on the campuses. In some cases, educators perceive difficulties associated with consistency in application of the rules or avoidance of direct confrontation with behavioral problems.

"There is a point system which should lead to certain sanctions. It is apparent that this is not always followed."

-Teacher

Others suggest discipline problems may arise because some students are experiencing significant stress in other parts of their lives. These stresses can be severe and interfere with students' ability to attend school and focus on classwork.

Summary: Perceptions of School Climate

Teachers, parents, and students are positive about their experiences at HPS. They feel there are high expectations for students to succeed and that teachers go beyond their designated responsibilities to aid students. Challenges include the need to expand communication efforts and establish more stability in the principals' role in order to strengthen school culture.

Professional Development (Levers 1 and 2)

The next segment of the survey asked a series of questions related to professional development for teachers and principals. Survey results indicate marked differences in perceptions of professional development between principals and teaching staff (see Table 2). Principals feel professional development is aligned with standards and effectively designed to help improve performance. Almost 60% of the teachers agree that professional development is sufficiently differentiated for their role or level of experience. Teachers are less inclined to believe that professional development is improving the leadership skills of their administrators.

Table 2: Perceptions of Professional Development

Professional development offerings...	Principals (n = 146)			Teachers (n = 1,581)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D
Are aligned to performance standards.*	82%	12%	6%	72%	15%	13%
Are differentiated to meet the specific needs of teachers.*	71%	14%	15%	58%	19%	23%
Help to strengthen teachers' instructional practices.*	80%	13%	7%	68%	16%	15%
Help to strengthen administrators' instructional supervision.*	76%	12%	12%	53%	32%	15%
Support me in meeting the learning needs of all students.*	79%	17%	4%	65%	19%	16%

Most teachers in the focus groups indicate that they have many opportunities to participate in professional development, both in and outside the district. Teachers report that if they located a training which would be beneficial to their teaching effectiveness, they could petition their principal for funds, which would most likely be made available as long as the training was appropriate for the teacher's role.

Most teachers in the focus groups indicate that they have many opportunities to participate in professional development.

Teachers also indicate that they have ready access to student data as needed. They are able to articulate how data from STAAR, MAP, and district assessments are used to group students for learning and to decide who needs further intervention. Some teachers are very satisfied with the professional development strategy used to help them learn to use data effectively, by first being told how to read the data and then being

allowed to continue that process on their own. Several teachers mentioned the use of data in a vertical sense—to plan for placements for subsequent years as well as checking to ensure that what is being taught now will lay the groundwork for future coursework. There is some concern that teachers in non-tested areas may be marginalized in the discussions and trainings related to student data. And, others wondered if students may be tested too frequently, taking away from valuable teaching time.

Teachers appreciate the opportunity to collaborate, yet there is concern at some campuses about the lack of common planning time. As one teacher described it,

“In theory we have common planning, but in practice, we do not.”

-Teacher

Teachers and administrators cite inconsistencies within and across campuses in the quality, format, and effectiveness of professional development. These inconsistencies affect their perceptions of whether the professional development meets their needs and interests.

“In terms of quality, it [PD] is not perfect. It’s mostly ‘sit and get’, even from folks we hire from outside.”

-Administrator

“They need to differentiate professional development. They put highly experienced teachers in the same room with brand new teachers.”

-Teacher

“My greatest problem with most teacher development offerings is that they tend to focus on advanced teaching techniques, but most teachers I know are struggling to teach multiple preps with inadequate, or often completely absent, curricular resources.”

-Teacher

Teachers in non-core areas, such as art or technology, feel that much of the professional development is targeted toward the core area teachers. They believe that such professional development should be adjusted to meet the specific needs of their class assignments. In addition, teachers in both core and non-core areas raise concerns about the expertise of the trainers.

Several coaches indicate that professional development would be more effective if it was less conceptual and focused instead more on the practical application of the content in the classroom. They describe a need for modeling so teachers can *“see what it [the instructional strategy] will look like in their classroom.”*

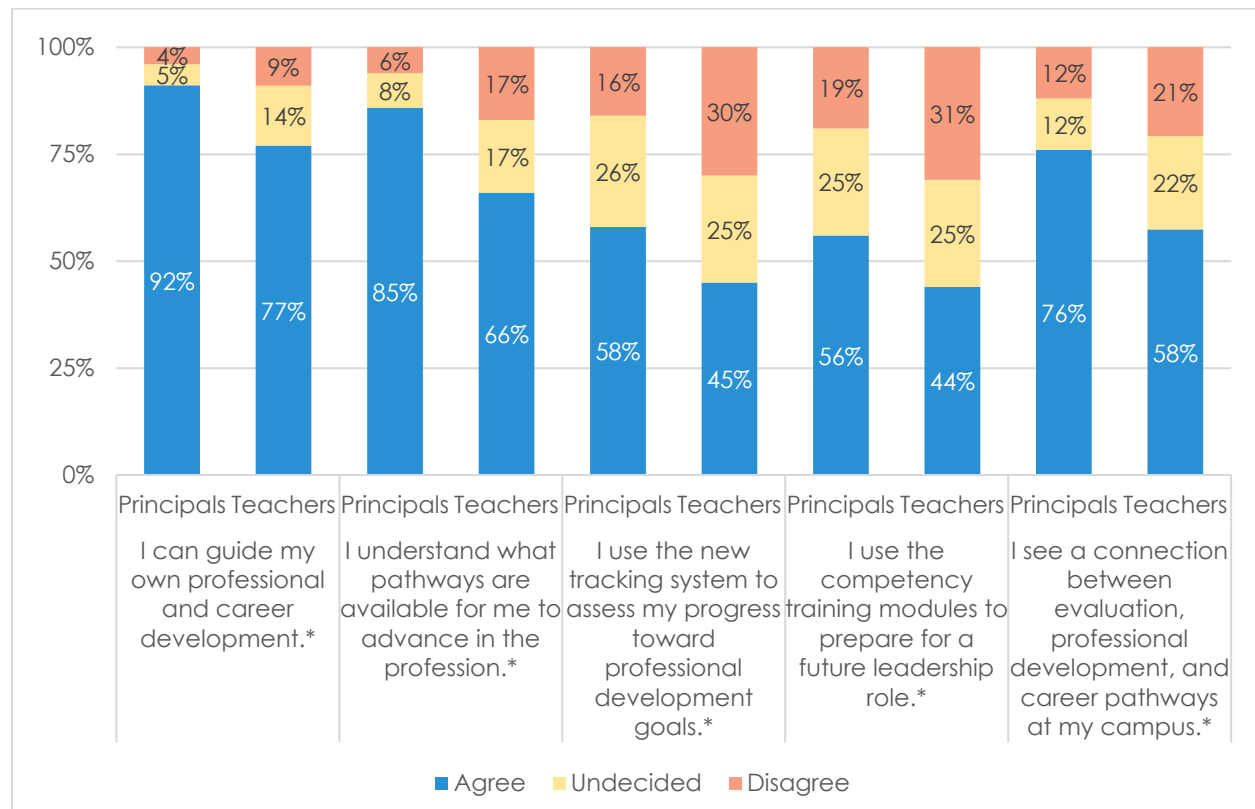
Summary: Perceptions of Professional Development

Teachers appreciate having opportunities to participate in professional development but would like to see offerings more tailored to their specific roles. This is a particular concern for non-core teachers who often feel that their needs are overlooked in the planning of professional development. Teachers, principals, and coaches alike cite a desire for more practical application of the professional development so that learning and new practices can be more effectively translated to the classroom. Educators appreciate the ability to collaborate with peers and are looking forward to sharing learning in PLCs.

Career Pathways (Lever 3)

In the next section of the survey, CTAC asked educators to describe their understanding of career pathways, the new tracking system, and competency training modules (see Figure 2). Principals agree that they have the ability to guide their own career and professional development and understand what additional pathways are available. However, less than 60% of principals indicate that they use the tracking system or training modules.

Figure 2: Perceptions of Career Pathways



Teachers also believe that they can guide their own professional development, with two-thirds agreeing that they understand the pathways to growth. Less than half of the teachers report that they use the tracking system or competency modules.

The largest difference in responses in this portion of the survey concerns the connection between evaluation, professional development, and career pathways. While 76% of principals believe this connection is clear, only 58% of teachers agree.

“I don’t believe we have an established career path so to speak. We do move around to various roles...It would have helped if I could have had steps that I would follow to get me there.”

-Teacher

In focus groups, educators elaborated on the relationship between their evaluation and professional development. For example, some teachers indicate that their principals place a high priority on using evaluation data to generate discussion and to inform professional development, while others do not. When these conversations do take place, teachers feel that the resulting professional development contributes to their growth.

Some coaches who are allowed to see teachers' evaluation data report using that data to assist the teacher in goal setting. Coaches also described how they used evaluations to decide who needs extra support with particular areas of practice. Again, this occurs at some campuses and not at others.

Evaluation conferences are more meaningful if they are consistently tied to specific recommendations for professional growth.

Summary: Perceptions of Career Pathways

Teachers have difficulty articulating the career pathways that are available to them. In some cases, they appear to be unaware of options or their eligibility to participate. The connection between evaluations, professional development, and career pathways is unclear to teachers and principals. Teachers indicate that evaluation conferences would be more meaningful if they were consistently tied to specific recommendations for professional growth. Coaches are willing to support teachers' growth, but need to have greater access to the teachers' evaluation to be effective.

Performance-based Compensation (Lever 4)

As indicated in Table 3, survey respondents are generally positive about performance-based compensation (PBC). Most feel PBC is an appropriate tool for rewarding teachers whose students are high performing and feel it could be a strategy for improving instructional practices. Most also agree in providing incentives for educators in direct support roles in the schools as well as for principals. Consistent with other survey responses, principals are more positive than teachers.

Table 3: Perceptions of Performance-Based Compensation

Performance-based compensation should...	Principals (n = 146)			Teachers (n = 1,581)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D
Reward teachers for improving student achievement in their classrooms.*	95%	2%	3%	80%	11%	8%
Reward teachers for improving instructional practices.*	96%	2%	2%	82%	11%	7%
Reward teachers for serving in such roles as teacher mentors, instructional coaches, or department chairs.*	97%	2%	1%	86%	9%	5%
Reward principals for improving student achievement at their campuses.*	92%	6%	2%	72%	18%	10%

Comments from the survey and focus groups offer a more nuanced view, providing perspectives on issues ranging from motivation to fairness in a performance-based compensation system.

“I love what I do. A bonus is for good work. I do it because I love it. For teachers, it is an incentive, encouragement – an extra motivation.”

-Administrator

“Last year, I got a little bit of money. But I am going to help teachers whether I get a bonus or not.”

-Teacher

“SPED students are unfairly dispersed. For example, I have three times the number of my counterpart, so she will receive a bonus and I will not.”

-Teacher

Some parents in focus groups question the impact of performance-based compensation.

“Money is not always a driver, especially if you have a top performer.”

-Parent

“The reality is that a good teacher is going to do what she does because she loves what she does. Why not recognize her? Her colleagues are going to see what she is doing and they are going to mimic her.”

-Parent

A number of parents cite the extensive time commitment and sacrifices of excellent teachers. These include using their own money to buy classroom supplies or small incentive gifts for students and spending time after school and in Saturday school tutoring students in need. They feel the incentives could provide at least some compensation for these efforts.

Parents and students describe HPS teachers as often providing support that parents cannot give or elect not to give their students. One parent indicated that the teacher had told her she had to give more to her students because *“you don’t want to leave kids out at that age.”* One student, who admittedly might be biased, is highly supportive of incentives for all teachers, explaining:

“I have seen kids who could barely function at all and then they go to school and talk to my mom, who is a teacher. And they will be able to function in a way they were never able to before.”

-Student

Students are less supportive of incentives for principals. Many indicate that they do not know the principal and would find it difficult to articulate how the principal contributes to student learning. A number of students indicate that incentives might be effective if principals are more involved with students.

“It depends. If they do more than they are expected to do, then they should get more money. If they are just doing what they must, then they should not get it.”

-Student

Some teachers also express skepticism about rewarding principals for the achievement of teachers, citing what is perceived as low levels of support for teachers.

Perceptions of the potential impact of performance-based compensation are also varied. Some express concern that stipends for some administrators have actually decreased with the new system, potentially having a negative impact on motivation.

In interviews, principals are relatively consistent in believing that the incentives are motivators. Several principals mentioned teachers' willingness to participate in after school tutoring.

“Some teachers think about it when they do after school. They get paid for Saturday, but not for after school. The incentive is not the main thing [though]. They want to do well as it reflects on them and the school.”

-Administrator

Another principal noted that all students who participated in the after school tutorials passed the state assessment. This principal indicated that for those teachers, praise might be sufficient reward. Principals reported that the incentives for teachers work because they underscore the fact that their contribution is valued. Another noted that it is on the “agenda” to talk to staff about the availability of incentives if more teachers reach the goals set. And, principals feel the incentives may improve the conversations between principals and their teachers.

“It affects the conversations we have with teachers. When you meet with teachers and discuss their goals, we talk about it. We tell them you can do multiple things [for the bonuses]. It allows for motivation and ambition to show.”

-Administrator

There was discussion in focus groups about the potential for incentives to hinder, rather than help, collaboration. For example, some teachers suggest that there is no incentive to help another teacher, particularly if you, yourself, are not eligible to receive an incentive. There is also concern that non-core teachers might feel slighted by the program as currently designed.

There is misunderstanding about the basis for incentives.

Others suggest that the bonuses would be more meaningful if they were based on student growth rather than student proficiency. The concern centers on the fact that some teachers of gifted and talented students would have an easier time getting students to reach proficiency. As one teacher stated, that

"*would get a lot of teachers.*" Others feel that teachers of low-performing students might be at an advantage in this system. Simply put, there is misunderstanding about the basis for incentives.

Numerous interviewees report that the desire to be effective in the classroom and a supportive campus culture motivate their performance more than money does.

"Evaluations and merit bonuses do not make successful teachers. Effective mentors, a positive work climate, and intrinsic motivation are more valuable."

-Teacher

"Consistent recognition, positive praise, teacher-centered development, and less political reprimand will increase attractiveness and retention to our field—not money."

-Teacher

Summary: Perceptions of Performance-based Compensation

Interviewees largely indicate that teachers' commitment to their students and a supportive school culture are more motivational for high performance than are financial incentives. At the same time, most feel that financial incentives do provide tangible evidence of appreciation for a job well done. There is misunderstanding about the basis for incentive awards.

Perceptions of Teacher and Principal Evaluation

Principals are generally more positive about the evaluation system than the teachers (see Table 4). Most principals and teachers agree that teacher observation includes a pre- and post-observation conference. Most teachers agree that their evaluators are qualified and both teachers and principals agree that the same individual conducts the conferences and the evaluation. Seventy-five percent or more teachers and principals reported that they receive helpful feedback from their evaluator. Teachers are less positive about the connection between their evaluation and professional development plans.

Table 4: Perceptions of Educator Evaluation

Survey Item	Principals (n = 146)			Teachers (n = 1,581)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D
Classroom observations include a pre-observation conference, the observation, and a post-observation conference.	86%	10%	4%	79%	8%	13%
Observations of my instructional practices are conducted by qualified observers/evaluators (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	83%	9%	8%
The same observer/evaluator conducts the conferences and the observations.	89%	10%	2%	84%	7%	9%
My observer/evaluator provides helpful feedback on improving my instructional practices (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	13%	12%
Observations of my instructional leadership are conducted by the same supervisor (for principals only).	80%	14%	6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
My supervisor provides helpful feedback on improving my instructional leadership (for principals only).	80%	14%	6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
The results of my evaluation inform my professional development plan for next year.*	77%	17%	6%	67%	19%	14%

In the interviews, some principals report the system results in more fact-based evaluations. In contrast, other principals say that the system is having minimal effect on how teachers are evaluated. Principals generally appreciate that each teacher has multiple observations in key areas that factor into the overall evaluation score.

“With the new model, we are only recording the facts—what is happening in the classroom. So I think that is positive. It made it more specific as far as the domains go and made it more clear for the teachers what they will be evaluated on.”

-Administrator

Interviewees understand that feedback is key to an effective evaluation system. There are differences of opinion among the teachers about the quality of the feedback they receive from principals. While some teachers are satisfied, others indicate that the feedback they receive is limited. They express concern that observations are conducted by observers inexperienced in the process, inexperienced in the content being taught, or that there are different observers each time an observation is conducted.

“I believe teachers need more constructive feedback in reference to their teaching and not other items that are not related to teaching.”

-Teacher

“The tone of the conference is ‘here’s what you did wrong’ instead of ‘how can we help you help your students better?’”

-Administrator

“You can never be sure if the difference or growth is real or just due to differences in how people observe.”

-Teacher

There is some concern that teachers do not fully understand the evaluation system and the kinds of support they can receive to become stronger educators.

“It [the evaluation system] has yet to be fully explained to teachers. We utilize the system because it is required, but I believe many seasoned educators are still unaware of the professional development modules included in it.”

-Teacher

Because principals have an expanded role in managing facilities and operations, finance, and in some cases, construction, some administrators feel that this results in an environment where principals cannot focus on instruction. Teachers also recognize that for some principals, time constraints are affecting the level of instructional support they can provide. Again, though, numerous principals believe the greater issue is that principals would benefit from additional knowledge of pedagogy.

Summary: Perceptions of Teacher and Principal Evaluation

The principal and teacher evaluation system is appreciated, in part because of its focus on the growth of the teacher. In practice, principals and teachers find that the application of the system is time-consuming and managed inconsistently across and within campuses. This leads to concerns about the fidelity of implementation and the overall evaluation outcomes. Many teachers have questions about the qualifications of their observers. Principals like the evaluation and goal setting approach but feel they lack the time to complete all observations properly.

Outcomes Associated with H-STEP

Most principals and teachers feel that the H-STEP program is leading to more reflection on instructional practices and instruction-focused dialogue with colleagues and supervisors (see Table 5). They believe the program may have a positive effect on student achievement and contribute to closing achievement gaps. Principals are more supportive of these statements than teachers. HPS educators are less confident about the potential impact of H-STEP on recruitment and retention.

Table 5: Perceptions of the H-STEP Program

Survey Items	Principals (n = 146)			Teachers (n = 1,581)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D
I believe H-STEP contributes to improvement in...						
Reflection on my instructional practices.*	82%	15%	3%	65%	25%	10%
Instruction-focused dialogue with my colleagues.*	79%	19%	2%	60%	27%	13%
Instruction-focused dialogue with my supervisor.*	83%	12%	4%	63%	25%	12%
Student achievement at my campus.*	87%	11%	2%	64%	27%	10%
Reduction of the gaps (e.g., student achievement, teacher effectiveness) between lower- and higher-poverty campuses.*	82%	16%	2%	57%	31%	12%
Recruiting effective teachers.*	73%	20%	6%	56%	32%	12%
Recruiting effective principals.*	67%	24%	9%	53%	34%	13%
Retaining effective teachers.*	82%	13%	5%	57%	29%	14%
Retaining effective principals.*	74%	18%	8%	55%	34%	11%

In interviews, administrators see a connection between evaluation outcomes and professional development plans. They suggest that evaluation outcomes are used to determine who needs support and if the support was effective. Other administrators note that looking across campuses for areas of strength and weakness contributes to the identification of appropriate professional development opportunities for the district as a whole. Several interviewees cite the usefulness of the evaluation to determine “TINAs”—teachers in need of assistance.

“Not everyone needs the same support. I will see if there is improvement and if my intervention helped.”

-Administrator

Some feel that this pattern of evaluation improved communication between teachers and the principal.

“The administrator and teacher conversations are richer and barriers are broken down as we work for teacher improvement.”

-Administrator

Administrators also report that conversations are also more likely to be fact-based and tied to specific observations made during classroom visits. Some feel that H-STEP sets in place a structure for teachers to reflect on their own teaching, which should result in improved practice over time.

“It gives a map to yearly goal. They will know what to do to reach the goal. They will keep the goal in mind and share with students...Reaching the goal is self-actualizing. It’s a challenge to reach the goal.”

-Administrator

Although many educators indicate that they think there could be a link between the evaluation and performance-based compensation systems and student achievement, the responses are not consistent. Parents clearly feel that incentives would help with recruitment and retention of highly effective teachers. Some parents express concern that, in some cases, teachers in nearby LEAs were being paid on a higher salary scale. Therefore, these incentives could help equate teacher pay with other districts.

Interviewees have differences of opinion on whether H-STEP will affect recruitment and retention and, if so, in what ways.

“I don’t know about recruitment. I think retention will increase simply because teachers will have that sense of community.”

-Teacher

“But now with this teacher-led professional learning community, I think there will be more exposure to conversations with more experienced teachers. Professional Learning Communities will help our recruitment. That is another piece that we will talk about when we are hiring.”

-Administrator

“The biggest thing is the support—training on a growth-minded structure in the school system will help us.”

-Administrator

Summary: Perceptions of the H-STEP Program

Interview and survey respondents feel that the H-STEP program will increase reflection on practice and increase collegiality and sharing with peers. While many question the potential impact of H-STEP on recruitment and the impact of money as a motivator, they value H-STEP’s pedagogical support, professional learning communities, and professional development tied to evaluation outcomes.

Additional Support Needed

Both teachers and principals indicate a need for additional support in using multiple measures to assess students' learning, using data to set goals, and implementing differentiated instruction (see Table 6). In addition, most respondents want more support in using data from their evaluations to improve their practice as, respectively, teachers or principals.

Table 6: Perceptions of Additional Support Needed

Survey Item	Principals (n = 146)			Teachers (n = 1,581)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D
To increase my effectiveness as a teacher or an administrator, I need additional support in:						
Using multiple measures or assessments to monitor student growth.	76%	8%	16%	68%	14%	18%
Using student achievement data in setting learning goals.	77%	7%	15%	70%	13%	17%
Differentiating instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students.	84%	5%	11%	80%	10%	10%
Using data from my evaluations to make improvements in my instructional practices (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	72%	15%	14%
Using data from my evaluations to make improvements in my instructional leadership (for principals only).	88%	5%	7%	N/A	N/A	N/A

In the focus groups, interviewees describe several supports that would strengthen HPS. As an example, principals indicate that they value their interactions with the central office. To take the support they receive to a higher level of impact, they would like more consistent contact with the central administration that allows for asking questions, probing issues, and receiving leadership development.

Administrators cite a need for more coaches on campuses. As one principal notes, *"we target support for our students and should be targeting support for our teachers as well."* Principals and teachers mention specific needs for training on STEM integration and basic science knowledge as well as strategies for developing effective PLCs. Coaches identify other professional development needs, including instructional strategies for English language learners and students with disabilities. Coaches and coordinators also express a need for additional "coaching" training.

"We target support for our students and should be targeting support for our teachers as well."

HPS educators and parents, alike, describe needs for improvement in communications. This is a recurring theme across interviews and focus groups. Campus-based educators cite communication challenges such as receiving conflicting recommendations, requirements or advice regarding instruction. Teachers are concerned about different directions or inconsistent approaches coming from the various instructional support units. These result in confusion and mixed messages about how to approach instruction. As we have seen earlier in the report, insufficient communication is also affecting teachers' understanding of H-STEP as a district-wide initiative.

"I am a [content area] teacher and have been in touch with the central office for a number of different things. Each one sends separate answers and sometimes they conflict with one another."

-Teacher

For parents, there is concern that notification for campus events often comes too late for them to plan to participate. In addition, parents feel more communication should be made available in Spanish to support the large population of parents who do not speak English. Parents believe that low rates of family involvement are due, in part, to these communication challenges.

Summary: Perceptions of Additional Support Needed

Educators appreciate the interaction with the central office. Campus-based educators want more focused and customized assistance that addresses the specific needs they have on their campuses and in their classrooms. Principals, teachers, and coaches identify specific areas where assistance is needed. For HPS educators and parents, alike, there is an overriding need to improve the quality, consistency, and content of communications.

Comparison between TIF Priority and TIF Non-Priority Campuses

A final comparison examined differences between responses of TIF priority campuses and other TIF campuses in the HPS system (see Table 1 in Appendix). For principals, the responses are roughly comparable with two exceptions. Principals in priority schools are less likely to agree that they use the competency training modules (48%) as compared to principals from the other campuses (58%). And, principals in priority schools are less likely to agree (77%) that performance-based compensation should reward principals for student achievement as compared to principals in other schools (96%).

Teacher responses for priority and non-priority campuses are similar to one another for most items. One difference of note is related to perceptions of whether the campus promotes continuous learning for teachers and administrators. Teachers in the priority schools are less likely to agree that this support exists on their campus (71%) as compared to teachers in other schools (80%). In part, this could be due to the nature of the student population as being more challenging in priority schools, perhaps resulting in greater need for support.

V. EDUCATOR AND STUDENT DATA

Teacher Evaluation Outcomes

CTAC compared the last three years of teacher evaluation data for TIF and non-TIF campuses. Among the TIF campuses, we also compared those designated as priority campuses to the remaining TIF campuses. These data were examined at the overall level as well as the indicator level. For the purposes of this review, we averaged ratings on the same indicator for the same teacher when more than one observation was conducted. This makes it possible to determine a level of performance consistent with the Harmony Teacher Evaluation and Support System (H-TESS) rubric as follows:

- 1.0-1.99 – Ineffective
- 2.0-2.99 – Effective: Emerging
- 3.0-3.99 – Effective: Proficient
- 4.0 – Highly Effective

In initial comparisons, we examined teachers on the TIF campuses to teachers on other campuses. There is a pattern of moderate levels of change in evaluation over time. Initially, teachers on TIF campuses were rated lower than those on non-TIF campuses, but those differences have narrowed over a three-year time span as evidenced in Table 7.

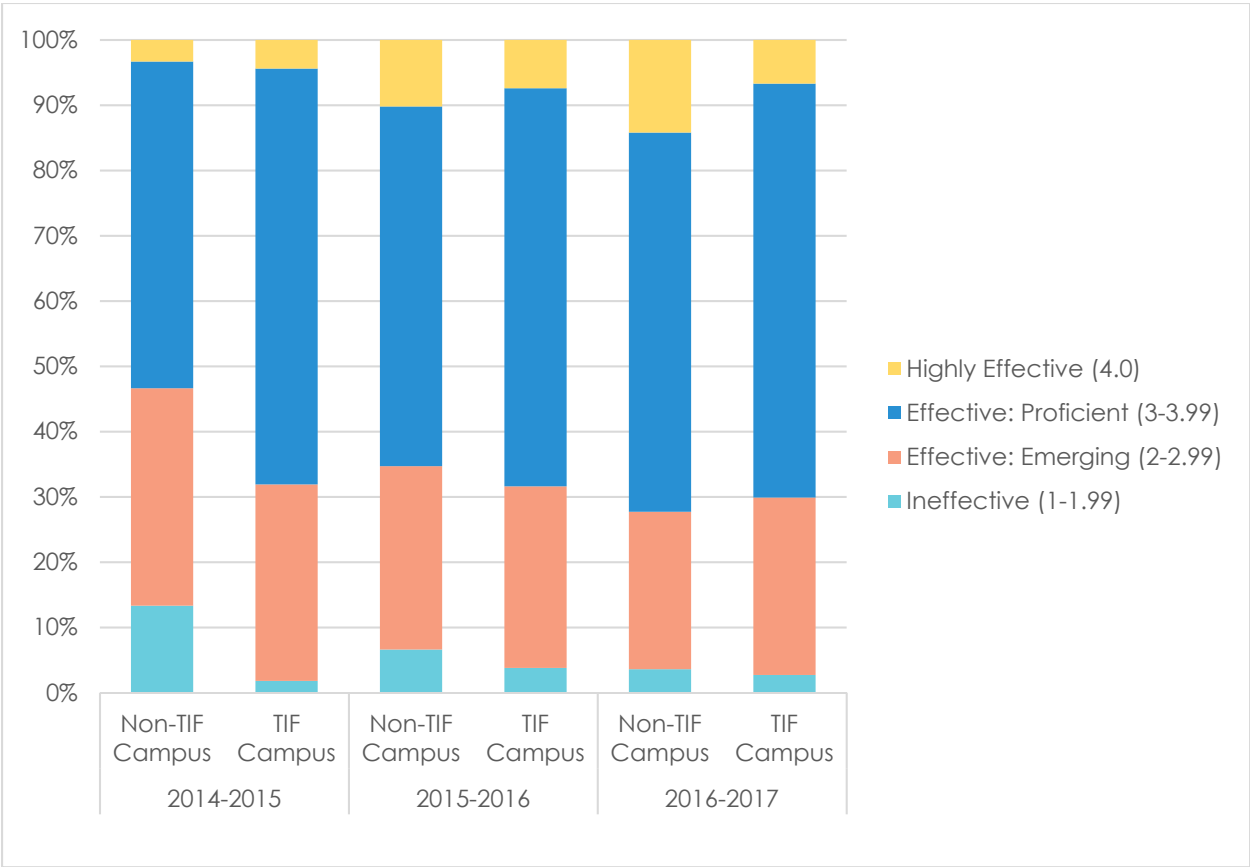
Table 7: Teacher Evaluation Outcomes, 2014-2015 to 2016-2017

Year	Campus Type	N of Teachers	Distribution of Observation Ratings				Average Rating
			Ineffective	Effective: Emerging	Effective: Proficient	Highly Effective	
2014-2015	TIF	115	1.7%	60.9%	36.5%	0.9%	2.74
	Non-TIF	30	13.3%	43.3%	43.3%	0.0%	2.68
2015-2016	TIF	1,326	5.2%	47.7%	46.0%	1.1%	2.81
	Non-TIF	308	7.5%	44.8%	47.4%	0.3%	2.81
2016-2017	TIF	1,663	3.8%	46.1%	49.4%	0.8%	2.86
	Non-TIF	396	4.5%	45.7%	48.0%	1.8%	2.86

Each year, HPS rates teachers on five individual indicators: 1c: setting instructional outcomes, 2c: managing classroom procedures, 3b: using questioning and discussion techniques, 3c: engaging students in learning, and 3d: using assessment in instruction. The following analyses of two of the indicators show patterns of change over time; the other three do not at this time.

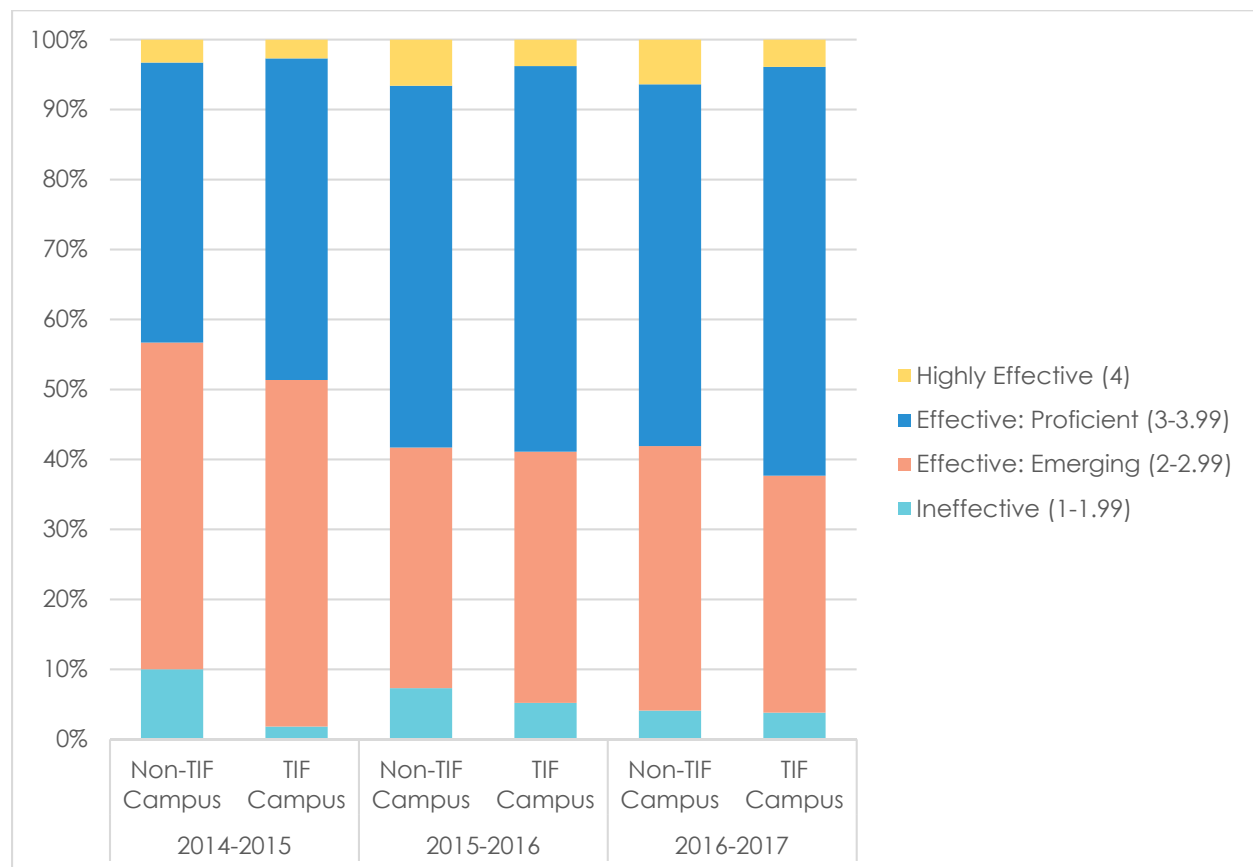
At the individual indicator level regarding setting instructional outcomes (see Figure 3), teachers on TIF campuses were initially more likely to be rated as effective: proficient or above than those in non-TIF campuses. Over time, the distributions have become fairly similar. There is one significant difference in the 2016-2017 school year between TIF and non-TIF teachers on the setting instructional outcomes standard. This is due to higher rates of those in the highly effective category at non-TIF campuses.

Figure 3: Distribution of Teacher Ratings on Setting Instructional Outcomes Standard



There is also a pattern of increasing effectiveness in the use of questioning and discussion techniques indicator. The distributions of TIF and non-TIF teachers are comparable and both groups are demonstrating improvement over time on this indicator (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Distribution of Teacher Ratings on Questioning and Discussion Techniques Standard



Within the TIF campuses, there are significant differences between teachers from priority and non-priority campuses in the overall ratings beginning in the 2015-2016 school year (see Table 8).

Table 8: Teacher Evaluation Ratings in Priority and Non-Priority Schools

Year	Campus Type	N of Teachers	Distribution of Observation Ratings				Average Rating
			Ineffective	Effective: Emerging	Effective: Proficient	Highly Effective	
2014-2015	TIF Priority	23	0.0%	60.9%	39.1%	0.0%	2.71
	TIF Non-Priority	92	2.2%	60.9%	35.9%	1.1%	2.75
2015-2016	TIF Priority	217	8.3%	55.3%	36.4%	0.0%	2.68
	TIF Non-Priority	1,109	4.6%	46.2%	47.9%	1.4%	2.84
2016-2017	TIF Priority	293	2.0%	53.2%	44.7%	0.0%	2.80
	TIF Non-Priority	1,370	4.2%	44.5%	50.4%	0.9%	2.87

When viewing evaluation outcomes at the individual indicator level, teachers from non-priority campuses are somewhat more likely to be evaluated as highly effective when compared to teachers from priority campuses (see Table 9). Significant differences are seen between the two groups on using assessments. Priority school teachers are not seen as effective at using assessments as part of instructional planning. Teachers in non-priority schools are also more likely to be seen as effectively engaging their students.

Table 9: Distribution of Teacher Ratings, Priority vs. Non-Priority Schools

Standard	School Year	TIF Priority Schools				TIF Non-Priority Schools			
		Ineffective	Effective: Emerging	Effective: Proficient	Highly Effective	Ineffective	Effective: Emerging	Effective: Proficient	Highly Effective
Setting Instructional Outcomes	2014-15	4.3%	34.8%	56.5%	4.3%	1.1%	28.9%	65.6%	4.4%
	2015-16***	5.5%	39.0%	51.5%	4.0%	3.5%	25.8%	62.7%	8.0%
	2016-17	2.7%	27.3%	65.9%	4.1%	2.7%	27.1%	62.9%	7.3%
Managing Classroom Procedures	2014-15	0.0%	34.8%	60.9%	4.3%	2.2%	28.3%	58.7%	10.9%
	2015-16	2.8%	25.0%	67.1%	5.1%	2.1%	29.3%	61.7%	7.0%
	2016-17	1.4%	24.9%	70.6%	3.1%	2.6%	25.9%	64.0%	7.5%
Using Questioning & Discussion Techniques	2014-15	0.0%	43.5%	47.8%	8.7%	2.2%	51.1%	45.6%	1.1%
	2015-16***	7.5%	42.9%	46.7%	2.8%	4.8%	34.6%	56.7%	3.9%
	2016-17	2.4%	35.2%	59.7%	2.7%	4.1%	33.6%	58.2%	4.1%
Engaging Students in Learning	2014-15	0.0%	34.8%	60.9%	4.3%	1.1%	35.9%	57.6%	5.4%
	2015-16**	5.1%	35.5%	55.3%	4.1%	4.1%	31.7%	56.7%	7.5%
	2016-17**	1.0%	34.1%	63.1%	1.7%	2.8%	29.1%	61.2%	6.8%
Using Assessment in Instruction	2014-15	0.0%	43.5%	39.1%	17.4%	0.0%	37.8%	60.0%	2.2%
	2015-16***	2.4%	44.3%	50.0%	3.3%	2.4%	27.1%	63.1%	7.4%
	2016-17***	1.0%	42.8%	53.4%	2.7%	2.4%	26.3%	63.8%	7.5%

**Indicates the difference is significant at the 99% confidence level.

***Indicates the difference is significant at the 99.9% confidence level.

Principal Evaluation Outcomes

CTAC reviewed goal attainment and principal evaluation ratings at all campuses (TIF and non-TIF) for the last two years.² The pattern of principal goal attainment has changed over the two-year period (see Table 10). More goals were attained or exceeded in the 2015-2016 school year than were last year.

² To protect the identity of principals, TIF principals were not compared to non-TIF principals, a consequence of the small sample size.

Table 10: Principal Goal Attainment by Year*

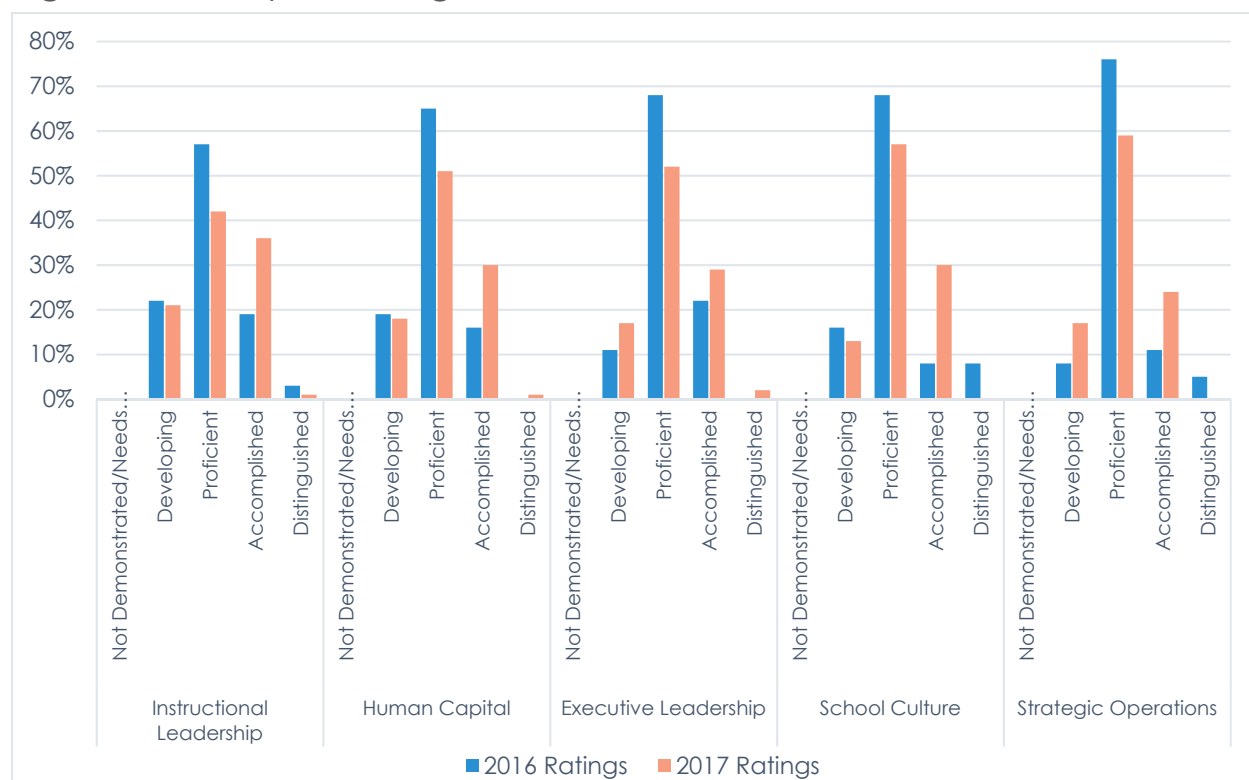
Goal Attainment Level	2015-2016	2016-2017
Not Progressing	1%	2%
Progressing	14%	30%
Attained	69%	45%
Exceeded Expectations	15%	20%
Significantly Exceeded Expectations	0%	3%

*There were 84 goals set in 2015-2016 and 64 goals set in 2016-2017.

Principal evaluations for the two years also indicate some shifts in evaluation ratings (see Figure 5). The Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System (T-PESS) rubric was first used in the 2015-2016 school year, therefore some of the changes may be due to a learning curve in the use of the rubric. Overall, more principals are moving from “proficient” to “accomplished” in each of the five standards rated:

- Instructional Leadership
- Human Capital
- Executive Leadership
- School Culture
- Strategic Operations

Figure 5: Principal Ratings over Time



Summary: Teacher and Principal Evaluation Outcomes

Overall, both teacher and principal evaluation ratings are improving over time. The improvements may be due to an increased understanding of the new evaluation parameters or due to improvements in performance. Although teachers on TIF campuses were originally rated as less effective than teachers from non-TIF campuses, those differences are now narrowing. Those on non-TIF campuses are rated as more effective at setting instructional outcomes. All teachers are improving in the use of questioning. When TIF schools are examined separately, teachers in non-priority schools are generally receiving higher ratings than teachers in priority TIF schools.

Student Performance Outcomes

CTAC examined four years of data from the NWEA MAP scores (grades K-10) and STAAR assessments (grades 3-8), including the end-of-course assessments administered at the secondary level. We will use these data to establish the pattern of achievement that existed prior to H-STEP's implementation. In the paragraphs to follow, data from these two sources are reported separately, with general conclusions reported at the end of this section.

NWEA MAP Outcomes

CTAC examined average MAP scores for students at each grade level to evaluate existing trends in student performance (see Tables 11-16). The MAP test is given twice a year to all students, with up to an additional two administrations for some students. For the purposes of this report, we have focused on the fall scores. The fall tests are usually given early in the school year. Therefore, the scores for any given grade level are reflective of the learning that students gained in the previous grade level. And, because data is collected annually, different students are included in the average from year to year.

In reading, HPS students perform at or above national norms for some grade levels and below in others (see Table 11). However, as of the test administration last fall, all but one grade are above the norm. The magnitude of difference between the norm and the HPS average scores is largest for the tenth grade scores, although that difference slightly decreased last year. When viewed from year to year, reading scores have remained fairly consistent over time.

Table 11: MAP Reading Averages by School Year and Grade*

Grade	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	National Norm 2013-2014	National Norm 2015-2016	Overall Average
K	142.6	140.8	141.8	141.7	N/A	141.0	141.7
1	160.6	160.2	161.0	161.8	160.0	160.7	161.0
2	176.9	177.5	178.8	177.7	175.9	174.7	177.8
3	188.8	188.1	189.5	189.3	190.2	188.3	189.0
4	197.9	198.8	197.7	198.9	199.6	198.2	198.3
5	206.4	205.5	206.5	205.5	207.1	205.7	205.9
6	210.6	210.1	210.1	211.2	212.5	211.0	210.5
7	216.4	214.7	215.5	215.1	216.6	214.4	215.4
8	219.9	219.8	219.4	219.1	219.5	217.2	219.5
9	222.2	222.8	223.9	222.6	221.8	220.2	222.9
10	228.7	227.5	227.6	225.7	222.9	220.4	227.2

*Based on a total of 98,192 valid observations.

The Language Usage MAP assessment measures writing skills, grammar, and the mechanics of writing (see Table 12). The results have been fairly flat from year to year. But, HPS students' scores were higher than the national norms in most cases. And, the magnitude of the difference between the norm and HPS scores increase with each grade level, with large differences beginning to be apparent in the eighth grade. This implies that students' writing skills are building over the course of their HPS education. However, this implication should be viewed with caution, because there is no assurance that students taking the assessment in the tenth grade had been with the district for their entire educational career.

Table 12: MAP Language Usage Averages by School Year and Grade*

Grade	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	National Norm 2013-2014	National Norm 2015-2016	Overall Average
3	190.0	189.1	189.9	189.8	190.9	189.4	189.7
4	199.1	198.5	198.2	198.8	201.0	198.8	198.6
5	205.9	205.2	206.6	205.6	207.4	205.6	205.8
6	211.0	210.5	210.3	210.7	212.2	210.7	210.6
7	215.0	214.8	214.9	214.3	215.9	214.0	214.7
8	218.7	219.7	219.4	219.2	218.7	216.2	219.3
9	221.2	221.9	223.0	222.0	221.0	218.4	222.1
10	225.7	226.7	226.3	225.5	221.5	218.9	226.1

*Based on a total of 74,481 valid observations.

Given the STEM focus of a number of HPS campuses, the mathematics and science scores are of particular interest (see Tables 13 and 14). The mathematics results present an interesting picture of student learning. Students are slightly below national norms in kindergarten and first grade. But, student performance begins to exceed the national norms consistently in the seventh grade and by the tenth grade, students are performing 11-12 points above the national norms. This pattern of a widening between HPS and norm scores in the higher grades remains fairly consistent from year to year, indicating this is a fairly stable difference. In science, at every grade level, HPS students perform higher than the national norm. These scores are consistent over time.

Table 13: MAP Mathematics Averages by School Year and Grade*

Grade	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	National Norm 2013-2014	National Norm 2015-2016	Overall Average
K	140.9	139.3	138.2	138.0	N/A	140.0	138.9
1	161.1	160.9	160.7	161.9	162.5	162.4	161.2
2	178.5	179.4	181.8	180.5	178.7	176.9	180.3
3	189.7	189.2	190.8	190.3	192.3	190.4	190.0
4	202.2	203.0	202.3	202.6	203.5	201.9	202.6
5	211.3	211.8	213.7	212.6	212.7	211.4	212.5
6	218.2	217.8	216.5	217.1	220.1	217.6	217.3
7	224.9	226.3	225.5	224.3	225.7	222.6	225.2
8	231.3	232.8	231.7	231.9	230.0	226.3	231.9
9	235.7	237.6	238.2	237.1	233.2	230.3	237.3
10	241.1	243.2	242.9	241.8	235.3	230.1	242.3

*Based on a total of 98,327 valid observations.

Table 14: MAP Science Averages by School Year and Grade*

Grade	Fall 2013	Fall 2014	Fall 2015	Fall 2016	National Norm 2013-2014	National Norm 2015-2016	Overall Average
4	196.5	196.8	196.5	197.4	196.2	194.6	196.8
5	201.5	202.6	203.4	202.5	201.1	200.2	202.6
6	207.2	206.6	206.4	207.2	205.2	204.3	206.8
7	210.0	209.1	209.4	208.4	208.1	207.2	209.1
8	212.7	212.6	212.3	212.8	210.8	210.3	212.6

*Based on a total of 51,481 valid observations.

CTAC averaged available scores for all grade levels in each subject to provide a snapshot view of improvement in student scores over time (see Table 15). The first section of the table depicts the average scores of all students who participated in the fall administration of MAP testing. These data demonstrate that there has been little change in student performance over time, although some minor fluctuations in scores is present.

The bottom half of the table includes only those students who have been in the HPS system from the fall of 2013 until the fall of 2016. Therefore, each row shown includes the same subset of students (n=6,772) in the computations of the average for the year. The scores of this group of students are the best reflection of the cumulative impact of HPS teachers over time. As is apparent, for reading, mathematics, language, and science, students' average scores increase over time. This trajectory contrasts markedly from the upper portion of the table where scores are fairly static. These results provide support for the value of HPS teaching over time. Students who were retained in the HPS system during the years of these scores demonstrated a greater rate of growth on average than the student population, as a whole.

Table 15: MAP Scale Score Averages over All Grades by Year and Subject

School Year	Reading	Mathematics	Language	Science
All students with scores				
2013-2014	200.9	207.1	208.3	206.4
2014-2015	198.7	205.7	209.0	205.3
2015-2016	198.7	205.2	209.5	205.9
2016-2017	199.0	205.4	209.0	206.1
Students with consecutive scores from 2013-2014 to 2016-2017				
2013-2014	189.8	193.5	200.3	195.9
2014-2015	199.7	205.8	207.6	202.4
2015-2016	208.2	216.0	213.6	207.0
2016-2017	214.2	223.8	218.5	210.7

Finally, CTAC examined the average growth scores of all students who had consecutive fall to winter test scores (see Table 16). The most growth is seen in mathematics where students grew as much as seven points from one administration to the next. The least amount of growth is seen in science. Continuing to follow these growth scores over the course of grant will provide us with a quick estimate of the impact of professional development on student learning and whether the impact is different depending upon content area examined.

Table 16: MAP Average Growth by Year and Subject

Year	Reading	Mathematics	Language	Science
2013-2014	3.14	5.26	2.65	1.49
2014-2015	5.63	7.86	3.98	2.92
2015-2016	4.37	6.78	3.20	2.60
2016-2017	5.18	7.26	3.96	3.15

STAAR Outcomes

CTAC examined STAAR student assessment results for grades 3-8 and the end-of course (EOC) assessments for each year beginning in 2013-2014 to determine if there are any pre-existing trends in the data. For the past three years, STAAR reading scale scores demonstrate increases for grades 3 and 4 over time (see Table 17). For the remainder of the grades, scale scores are either stagnant or demonstrate a slight decrease over time. All STAAR reading results are consistently above the cut-off points between not met and satisfactory performance.

Table 17: Average STAAR Reading Scale Scores*

Grade	School Year				Cut-Off Scores**	
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2013-2014 to 2014-2015	2015-2016 to 2016-2017
3	1,429.6	1,420.4	1,432.2	1,439.5	1,331	1,345
4	1,504.9	1,504.0	1,501.9	1,514.2	1,422	1,434
5	1,571.0	1,569.6	1,581.2	1,568.7	1,458	1,470
6	1,606.8	1,605.2	1,600.2	1,598.5	1,504	1,517
7	1,657.0	1,662.8	1,660.6	1,662.7	1,556	1,567
8	1,718.8	1,706.1	1,710.1	1,707.3	1,575	1,587

*Based on a sample of 62,355 valid observations.

**Cut-off scores differentiate between scores in the “not met” range and “satisfactory” scores.

To establish a measure associated with Index 2 of the state’s Performance Index, student progress, CTAC examined growth scores in reading for English language learners and compared that to non-English language learners in the district.³ As Table 18 demonstrates, there are higher percentages of English language learners in the “did not meet expectations” group and fewer in the “met” and “exceeded growth” groups. These values have fluctuated over the years as the number of English language learners has increased. For the non-English language learners, there is a modest increase in those exceeding growth expectations but the number of students not meeting expectations has remained fairly static.

³ For a detailed description of the state’s growth calculation, please see:

<http://tea.texas.gov/WorkArea/linkit.aspx?LinkIdentifier=id&ItemID=25769811320&libID=25769811337>

Table 18: Percent of Students Meeting Expected Growth in Reading

Student Group	School Year	Number of Students	Percent of Students		
			Did Not Meet Expected Growth	Met Expected Growth	Exceeded Expected Growth
Non-English Language Learners	2013-2014	10,313	37.8	44.9	17.3
	2014-2015	11,102	37.1	42.2	20.6
	2015-2016	13,068	35.2	44.4	20.4
	2016-2017	13,190	37.2	41.5	21.3
English Language Learners	2013-2014	888	38.2	35.1	26.7
	2014-2015	1,000	51.3	30.7	18.0
	2015-2016	1,014	51.4	29.6	19.0
	2016-2017	1,253	50.4	26.1	23.5

In mathematics, scale scores are generally increasing and exceed the cut-off between not met and satisfactory, with one exception. In third and fourth grades, scores are flat (see Table 19). This indicates that students are increasing their performance levels over time, in most cases. There is also an apparent difference in growth between English language learners and the rest of the population (see Table 20). Although there is volatility in the scores, the percent of English language learners exceeding growth is increasing. One early score in 2013-2014 indicated that 29% of the English language learners were exceeding growth expectations, which is quite a bit higher than the other years. However, that may be an anomaly associated with the relatively smaller population of students in that year.

Table 19: Average STAAR Mathematics Scale Scores*

Grade	School Year				Cut-Off Scores**		
	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016 to 2016-2017
3	1,451.7	1,433.7	1,448.6	1,462.6	1,392	1,347	1,360
4	1,543.9	1,539.2	1,540.0	1,559.8	1,471	1,453	1,467
5	1,619.3	1,608.0	1,629.2	1,633.0	1,489	1,487	1,500
6	1,644.0	1,649.1	1,648.3	1,668.3	1,509	1,523	1,536
7	1,660.9	1,694.2	1,696.5	1,711.9	1,551	1,563	1,575
8	1,673.7	1,682.6	1,699.3	1,708.7	1,583	1,583	1,595

*Based on a sample of 59,455 valid observations.

**Cut-off scores differentiate between scores in the "not met" range and "satisfactory" scores.

Table 20: Percent of Students Meeting Expected Growth in Mathematics

Student Group	School Year	Number of Students	Percent of Students		
			Did Not Meet Expected Growth	Met Expected Growth	Exceeded Expected Growth
Non-English Language Learners	2013-2014	9,738	31.0	48.7	20.4
	2014-2015	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	2015-2016	12,410	33.0	50.6	16.4
	2016-2017	12,525	30.2	49.0	20.8
English Language Learners	2013-2014	896	43.2	27.8	29.0
	2014-2015	1,005	43.9	33.2	22.9
	2015-2016	1,026	46.8	31.4	21.8
	2016-2017	1,263	39.7	33.5	26.8

Two additional core content areas with STAAR assessments, science and writing, demonstrate a similar pattern, with average scores for both grades exceeding the cut-off between not met and satisfactory each year (see Table 21). In science, a pattern of increase in scale scores is seen over time, a possible demonstration of the positive effects of the STEM emphasis over time. This may also account for the consistent increases in mathematics over time. The picture for writing is not as clear. Scores for seventh grade students have increased modestly over the four-year period, but the fourth grade students' scores have fluctuated, with last year's average falling slightly below the starting score in 2013-2014.

Table 21: Average STAAR Science and Writing Scale Scores*

Content	Grade	School Year				Cut-Off Scores**	
		2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2013-2014 to 2014-2015	2015-2016 to 2016-2017
Science	5	3,769.9	3,695.5	3,777.4	3,777.4	3,500	3,550
	8	3,811.7	3,791.5	3,872.6	3,892.2		
Writing	4	3,700.9	3,685.3	3,736.1	3,664.6		
	7	3,816.4	3,870.0	3,895.8	3,892.4		

*Science scores are based on 20,040 valid observations and writing scores are based on 20,939 valid observations.

**Cut-off scores differentiate between scores in the "not met" range and "satisfactory" scores.

To develop a snapshot of change over time, CTAC combined proficiency levels for STAAR scores across all grades in order to obtain average percent of students proficient at each of the four levels of performance (see Table 22). Reading proficiency levels have changed over time with more students falling in the “mastered” level, but more students also falling in the “not met” level. Although one would have to review individual student’s scores to make a definitive statement, it appears the increase at the “mastery” level accounts for a reduction in the percent of students in the “met” level. Similarly, fewer students in the “approaching” level seems to have the concomitant effect of increasing percent of students in the “not met” level.

Table 22: STAAR Proficiency Levels Across all Grades

Content Area	School Year	Percent of Students			
		Did Not Meet Expectations	Approaching	Met	Mastered
Reading	2013-2014	16.3	38.0	24.7	21.1
	2014-2015	19.0	38.1	21.0	21.9
	2015-2016	21.0	33.1	22.7	23.2
	2016-2017	21.9	31.8	21.4	24.9
Mathematics	2013-2014	21.3	40.9	20.5	17.3
	2014-2015	21.5	38.9	21.6	18.0
	2015-2016	21.9	33.9	24.6	19.6
	2016-2017	18.9	31.9	26.2	23.0
Writing	2013-2014	25.8	42.2	26.7	5.3
	2014-2015	28.0	38.6	25.2	8.2
	2015-2016	30.3	31.8	26.0	11.9
	2016-2017	31.4	31.9	26.4	10.3
Science	2013-2014	29.3	37.6	19.9	13.3
	2014-2015	32.4	36.8	20.0	10.8
	2015-2016	27.1	36.9	23.0	12.9
	2016-2017	28.0	32.8	23.8	15.4
Social Studies	2013-2014	33.7	38.4	14.4	13.5
	2014-2015	33.5	44.3	14.5	7.8
	2015-2016	35.7	35.4	15.7	13.2
	2016-2017	36.1	35.1	13.0	15.9

In mathematics, an improvement in the proficiency rate is clearer with increases seen every year in the number of students in the “met” and “mastered” levels and fewer students at the lower levels. For writing, more than 60% of students are below the “met” level but there have been modest increases in the “mastered” level. Science proficiency demonstrates a fairly consistent increase over time. The lowest levels of performance are seen in social studies. Last year only 28% of students were in the “met” or above level on the STAAR social studies assessments.

CTAC examined three end-of-course (EOC) measures in detail due to the potential vertical alignment with earlier measures: Algebra I and English I and II. Algebra I scores exceed the TEA cut-offs for not met to satisfactory in all years for both eighth and ninth grades (see Table 23). As to be expected, eighth graders’ scores are higher than their ninth grade peers. This is likely reflective of the fact that more advanced students take Algebra I in the earlier grade. Just as with the STAAR scores, Algebra I scores have been increasing each year.

For the purposes of this review, English I and English II scores were averaged together. For English, the average for students in all grades exceeded the cut-off score. There is a pattern of increase over time for ninth grade scores, while there has been modest decrease in tenth graders’ scores.

Table 23: End-of-Course Scale Scores, Algebra I and English I and II*

Content	Grade	School Year				Cut-Off Scores**	
		2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2013-2014 to 2014-2015	2015-2016 to 2016-2017
Algebra I	8	4,522.9	4,514.4	4,709.3	4,672.2	3,500	3,550
	9	3,927.8	3,952.1	4,067.3	4,119.8		
English I and II	9	4,079.1	4,079.0	4,101.3	4,126.3		
	10	4,212.7	4,148.9	4,189.7	4,178.2		

*Algebra I averages are based on 8,899 valid scores and the combined English I and II are based on 14,712 valid scores.

**Cut-off scores differentiate between scores in the “not met” range and “satisfactory” scores.

When English language learners are compared to other students in Algebra I, there is an apparent difference in growth rates (see Table 24). Although the percent of students falling in each category is quite variable over time for English language learners, more students “met” or “exceeded” expectations. The performance of the remaining population is less volatile, with fewer students “not meeting” expectations and a clear pattern of modest but improving growth over time. It is important to note that approximately 70% of non-English language learners and 80% of English language learners either met or exceeded growth expectations in the last tested year.

Table 24: Percent of Students Meeting Growth in Algebra I and English I and II

Content Area	Student Group	School Year	Number of Students	Percent of Students		
				Did Not Meet Expected Growth	Met Expected Growth	Exceeded Expected Growth
Algebra I	Non-English Language Learners	2013-2014	1,811	41.7	31.0	27.3
		2014-2015	1,911	42.0	29.5	28.5
		2015-2016	2,149	30.3	31.2	38.5
		2016-2017	2,291	29.2	32.1	38.7
	English Language Learners	2013-2014	48	25.0	25.0	50.0
		2014-2015	53	43.4	17.0	39.6
		2015-2016	80	27.5	28.8	43.8
		2016-2017	92	19.6	42.4	38.0
English I and II	Non-English Language Learners	2013-2014	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		2014-2015	1,386	39.6	59.2	1.2
		2015-2016	1,454	37.6	60.9	1.6
		2016-2017	1,601	38.9	59.4	1.7
	English Language Learners	2013-2014	88	45.5	52.3	2.3
		2014-2015	122	42.6	56.6	0.8
		2015-2016	161	50.9	47.8	1.2
		2016-2017	219	58.5	41.1	0.5

In English I and II, a number of English language learners do not meet growth expectations. In part, this may be due to the fact that students who are designated English language learners at the ninth or tenth grade would have missed significant years of education in English and would be expected to have lower growth rates. English language learners' growth levels appear to be decreasing over time. This may be due to the limited sample size in earlier years, which may not have been representative of the broader group. However, for both groups, very few students exceeded expected growth.

To examine EOC scores at the student level, CTAC examined the percent of students at each of the four performance levels over time (see Table 25). In English, approximately 59-60% of students score in the "meets" or "masters" levels. There are very small increases in the percent in the "did not meet" level, as fewer students score in the "approaching" level.

For Algebra I, the number of students performing in the "masters" level has increased over time, with 28.4% in that category in 2013-2014 compared to 41.9% this past year. A similar change is seen in biology, where the percent in the "masters" category increased from 10.2% to 21.6% in

the same time period. The pattern in U.S. History is also quite positive, with more than 77% of students now meeting or exceeding expected growth, increasing from approximately 61% in 2013-2014.

Table 25: Student Performance on End-of-Course Measures

Content Area	School Year	Percent of Students			
		Did not Meet Expectations	Approaching	Met	Mastered
English	2013-2014	17.4	22.2	51.5	8.9
	2014-2015	18.0	22.9	51.8	7.3
	2015-2016	19.9	20.1	50.7	9.3
	2016-2017	21.8	17.3	51.3	9.6
Algebra I	2013-2014	8.7	38.7	24.2	28.4
	2014-2015	11.3	34.8	23.2	30.8
	2015-2016	9.8	25.6	24.0	40.6
	2016-2017	9.4	24.8	23.9	41.9
Biology	2013-2014	4.3	40.0	45.6	10.2
	2014-2015	6.2	35.1	44.3	14.5
	2015-2016	8.2	29.6	45.8	16.5
	2016-2017	8.3	25.2	44.9	21.6
U.S. History	2013-2014	3.5	35.1	44.3	17.1
	2014-2015	4.4	22.5	37.9	35.3
	2015-2016	2.8	22.3	39.2	35.7
	2016-2017	2.9	20.0	36.3	40.9

Summary: Student Performance Outcomes

CTAC reviewed both NWEA MAP and STAAR/EOC assessment results to assess existing trends in student performance. We examined four years of data from both sources to provide a view of student learning across content areas.

HPS student achievement on the NWEA assessments exceeds the national norm in most grades. This is especially evident in the middle and high school grades. This applies to all subject areas under study—reading, writing, mathematics, and science. This pattern is relatively consistent over time. The most notable changes in the scores are in mathematics where students start out below the norm in early grades. By the tenth grade, scores are consistently 11-12 points above the norm.

Further, on the STAAR/EOC assessments, students' scale scores and proficiency outcomes are increasing in STEM-related subjects—mathematics, science, algebra, and biology. They are generally flat in the other tested subjects. Non-English language learners are outperforming English language learners in meeting growth expectations in reading and mathematics, although there have been higher percentages of English language learners in the "exceeds" growth expectations in recent years for both subjects.

In Algebra I, English language learners are demonstrating a higher level of growth than their peers. Writing and social studies scores for all students are less positive. Less than 60% of students are proficient in STAAR writing and little change is seen in that percentage over time. STAAR social studies performance is low in the eighth grade, although more than 75% of students are achieving at the "met" and "masters" level on U.S. History, indicating improvement by high school in a related subject area.

Student performance as measured by the NWEA assessments are consistent with the findings from the STAAR/EOC assessments for mathematics and science. In mathematics, students start out below the norms in grades 2-4, but exceed the norms and cut-offs beginning in middle school on both measures. In science, students' scores are higher than the NWEA norms at every grade level and the STAAR findings actually show increasing scores over the years.

CTAC also reviewed both NWEA MAP and STAAR/EOC results disaggregated by ethnicity, economic status, and English learner status. These findings are consistent with those reported above (see Tables 2-5 in Appendix). Student demographics have been fairly consistent over time, allowing for appropriate comparisons to be made from year to year (see Table 6 in Appendix).

As H-STEP implementation continues, we will assess changes in the trajectory of growth in each of these measures to determine if subsequent changes in performance can be attributed to the program.

VI. IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

Many of the foundational components needed for H-STEP to be successful are being put in place. Both support and incentives are being made available to teachers, principals and other educators.

Reasons to celebrate

The multi-faceted H-STEP initiative is well underway and the full weight of the district is behind it. During the Year One planning, development, and rollout phase, HPS actively engaged vendors and began to pilot and support all four levers for change. HPS' organizational sophistication has grown during this early phase. In this baseline year, Harmony hit the ground running *and* learning.

Responsive professional development and effective systems are at the heart of H-STEP. Through the initiative, core groups of educators began to receive training. In addition, HPS launched new systems in instructional support and compensation tied to the educator evaluation systems. These systems focus on strengthening, recognizing and rewarding frontline educators at the campuses.

Key constituencies, including educators and parents of HPS students, view the campuses positively. Teachers, parents, and students are generally pleased with their experiences at HPS. They feel there are high expectations for students to succeed and that teachers go beyond their designated responsibilities to aid students. The levels of student achievement at the campuses indicate these positive reactions are warranted.

There is a climate of good will within HPS and genuine appreciation from the campuses for the staff and services from the central office. This central/campus relationship is a necessary building block for an H-STEP initiative that intends, over time, to have an impact districtwide.

At the completion of Year One, the baseline year, the initiative is in its preadolescence. How HPS carries out the next steps in implementation will be key to fulfilling the aspirations and achieving the goals of H-STEP. There are legitimate reasons to celebrate early successes and concurrently focus attention on addressing needs identified by key constituencies.

Areas for Improvement

Issue One: Communications

Overview

The need for improved communications is a recurring theme across the district. It is hampering the understanding, acceptance, and ongoing implementation of H-STEP. The needs are multi-directional. They are prevalent in the communications from the central office to the campuses

and community, from the campuses to the central office, and within and across campuses. Addressing these needs is necessary to maximize the impact of H-STEP.

Recommended Action

Convene a communications task force. This should be a select working group of key central administrators, school level practitioners, and community members who are respected for their communication skills. Their focus should be to examine current communications in HPS—from top-down, bottom-up and lateral perspectives—and identify strengths, weaknesses and strategies for promoting more quality and consistency in communications at campus and district levels.

Build an interactive and dedicated H-STEP webpage. Everyone involved in ensuring the success of the H-STEP initiative needs to have readily available, accurate, and timely information. A dedicated webpage should provide easily accessible, just in time information when it's most needed. Additionally, by including an interactive component within the website, frontline practitioners and parents would have a vehicle for asking and receiving answers to their questions, and sharing effective practices that emerge during H-STEP implementation.

Develop and distribute H-STEP monthly talking points. In a district with many priorities, principals and their supervisors need help to keep the initiative at the forefront of their daily work routines. They should use these monthly talking points, in-person and through various media channels, to provide a steady drumroll of information to HPS educators.

Issue Two: Professional Development

Overview

A key to H-STEP success is the quality, accessibility and relevance of professional development. Teachers appreciate having opportunities to participate in professional development but emphasize that the offerings need to be tailored and relevant to their specific content areas and teaching assignments. Further, principals particularly need the demonstrable capacity to provide more credible and effective instructional leadership at their campuses.

Recommended Action

Provide professional development opportunities tailored to both core and non-core content area teachers. To maximize teacher interest in and completion of professional development, particularly in a self-consumed modular form, it's necessary to align professional development to a teacher's content area. Given the number of content areas, it will be important to determine which and how many teachers in a given content area require similar professional development that is best addressed through group sessions or shared modular formats, and which and how many teachers and content areas are best addressed through more individualized sessions or formats.

Emphasize and build the instructional and evaluative capacity of principals. The ability of principals to provide instructional leadership and conduct meaningful evaluations determines whether they are credible and effective. This ability is a cornerstone of campus success. The needs of principals in these areas are highlighted by teachers, supervisors and the principals themselves. These areas should be highlighted in the leadership development services of H-STEP with an emphasis on how to apply learnings at the principals' respective campuses.

Develop a series of principal leadership prompts. Through H-STEP, the district should provide protocols to assist principals to lead their campuses more effectively. Protocols can particularly help principals to facilitate an effective H-STEP implementation by organizing the school calendar in four phases: preparation, development, implementation, and results analysis. They can also build the capacity of principals to use H-STEP resources (e.g., professional development and new systems) to lead instructionally focused discussions with teachers individually in evaluation sessions and as a group via professional learning communities.

Issue Three: Implementation Guidance

Overview

Teachers and principals have general familiarity with H-STEP. They also understand that there is a bonus structure associated with the initiative. They are not clear on the specifics—the intended purposes of the initiative and what H-STEP means for their current roles, opportunities for professional growth, and the potential for career advancement. Without a firm grasp of its specific goals and components, teachers and principals will not be able to take full advantage of H-STEP. And, the forces of misinformation will undermine the program's effectiveness.

Teachers and principals also underscore that the connection between evaluations and professional development is unclear. Teachers, in particular, state that evaluation conferences would be more meaningful if they were consistently tied to specific recommendations for professional growth.

Recommended Action

Provide a series of crosswalk resources for teachers and principals. The purpose of these user-friendly materials is to delineate the connections between the evaluation system, professional development that is informed by the evaluations, and career pathways at HPS. The content of these materials, which should be reinforced during in-person training sessions, should map out how evaluation is being linked to individual growth opportunities, and should build teacher and principal understanding of what's possible in terms of their specific career pathways and bonus awards.

Set the expectation for principals that linking the growth needs of teachers to professional development is a core part of the evaluation process. By stressing this linkage, teachers will have greater confidence in the evaluation system and there will be little room for ambiguity for both teachers and principals about HPS' commitment to and expectations for its campus-based educators.

Issue Four: Policy

Overview

Principal turnover is high. This prevents staff and students from building relationships and creating a sense of community at the campus. The instability also interferes with and slows implementation of curricular shifts, instructional strategies, and other important academic efforts.

Recommended Action

Establish policy regarding the length of principal assignments. Consider a policy to establish minimum length for principal assignments. This would include a commitment by the new principal and the central office to keep a principal in place for a specified amount of time, if the principal's evaluation shows that performance is effective or highly effective.

Summary

HPS is already making important strides in implementing the H-STEP initiative. The steps taken to-date are encouraging and valued by frontline educators. Building on the accomplishments of Year One, the baseline year, HPS is well positioned to address the issues and challenges that are emerging during implementation.

APPENDIX

Table 1: Principals' and Teachers' Survey Responses by TIF Priority School Status, 2016 (N = 1,720)

	Principals (n = 146)						Teachers (n = 1,574)					
	Priority Schools (n = 33)			Other Schools (n = 113)			Priority Schools (n = 1,266)			Other Schools (n = 308)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D
Campus Conditions and Culture												
Students are expected to meet high academic standards at my campus.	100%	0%	0%	95%	4%	2%	86%	8%	6%	86%	7%	7%
My principal supports the work I do in the classroom.	84%	16%	0%	87%	8%	5%	81%	12%	7%	81%	10%	9%
My campus promotes continuous learning for teachers and administrators.	94%	3%	3%	93%	4%	3%	71%	15%	14%	80%	11%	9%
The purpose of H-STEP is clear to me.	73%	12%	15%	68%	17%	16%	50%	25%	25%	50%	22%	28%
The instructional vision of H-STEP is well communicated at my campus.	56%	28%	16%	58%	23%	19%	43%	28%	28%	44%	25%	31%
I receive the support I need to implement H-STEP at my campus.	61%	21%	18%	63%	25%	13%	42%	33%	25%	44%	30%	26%
Professional Development												
Are aligned to performance standards.	83%	10%	7%	82%	12%	6%	70%	17%	12%	73%	15%	13%
Are differentiated to meet the specific needs of teachers.	73%	13%	13%	70%	14%	16%	55%	21%	24%	59%	18%	23%
Help to strengthen teachers' instructional practices.	77%	13%	10%	81%	13%	6%	66%	19%	16%	69%	16%	15%
Help to strengthen administrators' instructional supervision.	77%	10%	13%	76%	13%	11%	50%	37%	13%	53%	31%	16%
Support me in meeting the learning needs of all students.	83%	10%	7%	77%	19%	4%	60%	22%	18%	66%	18%	16%
Career Pathways												
I can guide my own professional and career development.	82%	11%	7%	94%	3%	3%	76%	13%	11%	78%	14%	8%
I understand what pathways are available for me to advance in the profession.	86%	11%	4%	85%	8%	7%	66%	18%	16%	66%	17%	17%
I use the new tracking system to assess my progress toward professional development goals.	46%	39%	14%	61%	22%	17%	44%	29%	28%	45%	24%	30%

	Principals (n = 146)						Teachers (n = 1,574)					
	Priority Schools (n = 33)			Other Schools (n = 113)			Priority Schools (n = 1,266)			Other Schools (n = 308)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D
I use the competency training modules to prepare for a future leadership role.	48%	33%	19%	58%	22%	19%	42%	29%	29%	44%	24%	32%
I see a connection between evaluation, professional development, and career pathways at my campus.	79%	11%	11%	75%	13%	13%	55%	23%	22%	58%	21%	21%
Teacher and Administrator Evaluation												
Classroom observations include a pre-observation conference, the observation, and a post-observation conference.	88%	8%	4%	86%	10%	4%	79%	8%	14%	79%	8%	13%
Observations of my instructional practices are conducted by qualified observers/evaluators (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	83%	9%	8%	83%	9%	8%
The same observer/evaluator conducts the conferences and the observations.	84%	8%	8%	90%	10%	0%	82%	8%	10%	85%	7%	8%
My observer/evaluator provides helpful feedback on improving my instructional practices (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	11%	14%	75%	13%	12%
Observations of my instructional leadership are conducted by the same supervisor (for principals only).	71%	14%	14%	82%	14%	5%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
My supervisor provides helpful feedback on improving my instructional leadership (for principals only).	77%	18%	5%	80%	13%	7%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
The results of my evaluation inform my professional development plan for next year.	72%	24%	4%	79%	15%	6%	64%	23%	13%	68%	18%	15%
Performance-Based Compensation Performance-based compensation (PBC) should...												
Reward teachers for improving student achievement in their classrooms.	92%	0%	8%	96%	2%	2%	80%	13%	7%	81%	11%	8%
Reward teachers for improving instructional practices.	96%	0%	4%	96%	3%	1%	79%	13%	7%	82%	11%	7%
Reward teachers for serving in such roles as teacher mentors, instructional coaches, or department chairs.	88%	8%	4%	99%	1%	0%	85%	11%	4%	86%	8%	5%
Reward principals for improving student achievement at their campuses.	77%	19%	4%	96%	2%	2%	74%	19%	7%	72%	18%	10%

	Principals (n = 146)						Teachers (n = 1,574)					
	Priority Schools (n = 33)			Other Schools (n = 113)			Priority Schools (n = 1,266)			Other Schools (n = 308)		
	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D	A	U	D
The Impact of H-STEP on Educator Effectiveness and Student Growth I believe H-STEP contributes to improvement in...												
Reflection on my instructional practices.	85%	12%	4%	81%	15%	3%	69%	25%	6%	64%	25%	11%
Instruction-focused dialogue with my colleagues.	88%	8%	4%	76%	22%	2%	63%	26%	11%	59%	27%	14%
Instruction-focused dialogue with my supervisor.	88%	12%	0%	82%	13%	5%	67%	23%	11%	62%	25%	12%
Student achievement at my campus.	92%	8%	0%	86%	12%	2%	67%	26%	7%	63%	27%	11%
Reduction of the gaps (e.g., student achievement, teacher effectiveness) between lower- and higher-poverty campuses.	88%	12%	0%	80%	18%	2%	58%	32%	10%	57%	31%	12%
The Impact of H-STEP on Educator Engagement and Retention I believe H-STEP contributes to improvement in...												
Recruiting effective teachers.	65%	19%	15%	76%	20%	4%	63%	26%	11%	54%	34%	12%
Recruiting effective principals.	56%	28%	16%	69%	23%	7%	59%	28%	13%	51%	35%	13%
Retaining effective teachers.	85%	8%	8%	82%	14%	4%	61%	26%	13%	56%	30%	14%
Retaining effective principals.	73%	15%	12%	74%	18%	7%	60%	28%	12%	53%	36%	11%
Capacity Building To increase my effectiveness as a teacher or an administrator, I need additional support in:												
Using multiple measures of assessments to monitor student growth.	81%	15%	4%	74%	6%	19%	71%	13%	16%	67%	14%	19%
Using student achievement data in setting learning goals.	81%	8%	12%	76%	7%	16%	73%	11%	16%	69%	13%	18%
Differentiating instructional strategies to meet the needs of all students.	85%	4%	12%	84%	5%	11%	79%	9%	12%	80%	10%	10%
Using data from my evaluations to make improvements in my instructional practices (for teachers only).	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	72%	13%	15%	72%	15%	13%
Using data from my evaluations to make improvements in my instructional leadership (for principals only).	92%	8%	0%	87%	4%	8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Note: Principals refers to principals and assistant principals; Teachers refers to classroom teachers, non-classroom teachers (e.g., interventionists, reading specialists), and special programs educators (e.g., ESL/SPED/GT coordinators and teachers). Agree (or A) is a composite of strongly agree/agree. U = Undecided. Disagree (or D) is a composite of strongly disagree/disagree. Due to rounding, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100%. The following 8 schools were identified as priority schools in the district's 2016 TIF proposal: Harmony Science Academy – Austin; Harmony Science Academy – Houston; Harmony School of Excellence – Endeavor; Harmony School of Innovation – San Antonio; Harmony School of Innovation – Austin; Harmony School of Innovation – Laredo; Harmony Science Academy – Lubbock; Harmony Science Academy – Odessa.

Table 2: Disaggregated Growth Scores: NWEA Reading*

	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter
All Students	200.8	3.26	198.8	5.63	198.7	4.38	199.2	5.18
Gifted Students	216.5	4.34	217.9	4.70	217.1	4.21	220.0	4.06
Students with Disabilities	181.3	3.04	182.8	4.75	184.0	3.70	184.7	5.19
Ethnicity								
White	199.9	4.16	200.1	5.93	200.6	4.61	201.9	5.53
Asian	206.7	4.15	206.4	5.79	206.0	4.80	206.1	5.14
Black	198.0	2.61	196.4	5.69	197.3	4.28	197.2	5.78
Hispanic/Latino	200.2	2.67	197.1	5.46	196.7	4.21	197.4	4.86
Native American	201.3	3.87	200.1	4.92	199.1	5.77	199.3	5.38
Pacific Islander**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Socioeconomic Status								
Free Lunch	196.5	2.77	195.5	5.66	195.6	4.14	195.9	5.28
Reduced Lunch	200.4	3.57	199.1	5.30	198.7	4.41	199.1	5.19
Not Free and Reduced Lunch	203.1	3.82	202.9	5.70	203.0	4.69	203.6	5.05
English as Second Language Services								
Current	160.4	8.27	163.2	10.86	165.3	7.95	168.5	8.57
Past	188.2	3.09	190.0	5.71	190.1	4.07	190.9	5.59
Not Served	203.9	2.88	203.3	5.15	203.5	4.10	204.1	4.75

*Based on a total of 92,835 valid scores.

**Not reported due to sample size.

Table 3: Disaggregated Growth Scores: NWEA Mathematics*

	2013-2014		2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017	
	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter	Fall Score	Growth Fall to Winter
All Students	206.7	5.26	205.8	7.86	205.4	6.78	205.6	7.26
Gifted Students	224.0	7.05	225.5	8.67	225.7	6.67	228.6	6.99
Students with Disabilities	186.3	4.26	189.4	6.48	189.7	6.00	190.4	6.63
Ethnicity								
White	205.3	6.03	206.6	6.03	207.1	6.88	208.4	7.47
Asian	214.6	6.39	214.5	6.39	214.2	7.47	214.0	7.53
Black	201.3	5.33	201.1	5.33	201.5	7.00	201.4	7.60
Hispanic/Latino	206.7	4.61	205.0	4.61	204.0	6.49	204.3	7.01
Native American	205.7	4.42	208.2	4.42	206.4	5.20	205.1	5.98
Pacific Islander**	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Socioeconomic Status								
Free Lunch	202.6	4.76	202.8	7.45	202.2	6.64	202.5	7.16
Reduced Lunch	206.0	5.61	205.7	7.67	205.2	6.68	205.1	7.63
Not Free and Reduced Lunch	208.6	6.08	209.7	8.47	209.4	7.01	210.0	7.31
English as Second Language Services								
Current	162.4	8.75	165.5	12.60	167.0	10.50	170.4	10.24
Past	197.5	4.31	200.1	6.87	198.8	6.68	199.6	7.22
Not Served	209.7	5.21	210.3	7.60	210.1	6.46	210.5	6.98

*Based on a total of 92,866 valid scores.

**Not reported due to sample size.

Table 4: Disaggregated Average Scale Scores for all Grades: STAAR Reading*

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
All Students	1,587.4	1,583.4	1,588.5	1,589.6
Gifted Students	1,719.6	1,731.0	1,722.7	1,731.6
Students with Disabilities	1,488.8	1,444.8	1,457.0	1,451.1
Ethnicity				
White	1,611.2	1,613.7	1,610.9	1,611.1
Asian	1,645.8	1,652.7	1,653.7	1,660.7
Black	1,568.7	1,565.8	1,577.0	1,582.2
Hispanic/Latino	1,568.4	1,562.4	1,568.5	1,568.3
Native American	1,589.3	1,592.6	1,602.8	1,613.4
Pacific Islander**	...	...	...	...
Socioeconomic Status				
Free Lunch	1,555.8	1,553.5	1,559.5	1,561.3
Reduced Lunch	1,589.7	1,586.3	1,586.1	1,585.3
Not Free and Reduced Lunch	1,628.0	1,623.1	1,629.3	1,629.2
English as Second Language Services				
Current	1,388.2	1,398.9	1,402.7	1,437.7
Past	1,481.9	1,487.3	1,503.8	1,503.1
Not Served	1,606.0	1,607.9	1,613.5	1,619.5

*Based on a total of 62,362 valid scores. Results include students who were administered the STAAR Accommodated Assessment.

**Not reported due to small sample size.

Table 5: Disaggregated Average Scale Scores for all Grades: STAAR Mathematics*

	2013-2014**	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
All Students	1,600.6	1,603.6	1,614.1	1,628.2
Gifted Students	1,779.2	1,779.1	1,788.3	1,790.4
Students with Disabilities	1,497.7	1,472.5	1,487.3	1,495.5
Ethnicity				
White	1,622.3	1,633.1	1,632.4	1,647.0
Asian	1,697.0	1,699.9	1,718.8	1,725.5
Black	1,568.6	1,572.5	1,588.9	1,606.4
Hispanic/Latino	1,577.7	1,583.0	1,591.9	1,608.4
Native American	1,604.2	1,585.8	1,624.1	1,618.7
Pacific Islander***	...	...	...	...
Socioeconomic Status				
Free Lunch	1,568.3	1,573.8	1,585.1	1,602.7
Reduced Lunch	1,599.9	1,607.5	1,611.4	1,621.7
Not Free and Reduced Lunch	1,645.0	1,644.2	1,656.7	1,666.1
English as Second Language Services				
Current	1,439.9	1,431.9	1,429.0	1,479.0
Past	1,518.2	1,531.3	1,551.6	1,562.5
Not Served	1,616.1	1,623.9	1,635.3	1,653.8

*Based on a total of 59,464 valid scores. Results include students who were administered the STAAR Accommodated Assessment.

**The 2013-2014 STAAR Mathematics assessment was evaluated on a different scale of measurement and cannot be directly compared to later scores.

***Not reported due to small sample size.

Table 6: Student Demographics

	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Average
Number of Students	26,580	28,720	32,595	34,412	...
Gifted Students	10.0%	10.4%	11.2%	11.8%	10.9%
Students with Disabilities	5.2%	5.8%	6.2%	7.1%	6.1%
Ethnicity					
White	18.8%	17.6%	17.2%	15.4%	17.1%
Asian	14.2%	12.7%	12.9%	12.9%	13.1%
Black	19.3%	19.9%	20.0%	20.0%	19.8%
Hispanic/Latino	47.3%	49.4%	49.5%	51.3%	49.5%
Native American	0.4%	0.3%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Socioeconomic Status					
Free Lunch	49.2%	49.7%	51.0%	51.4%	50.4%
Reduced Lunch	11.8%	12.2%	10.2%	9.5%	10.8%
Not Free and Reduced Lunch	39.0%	38.1%	38.8%	39.1%	38.8%
English As Second Language Services					
Current	5.6%	6.4%	6.6%	6.7%	6.3%
Past	9.2%	12.1%	13.6%	15.9%	12.9%
Not Served	85.2%	81.5%	79.8%	77.5%	80.7%